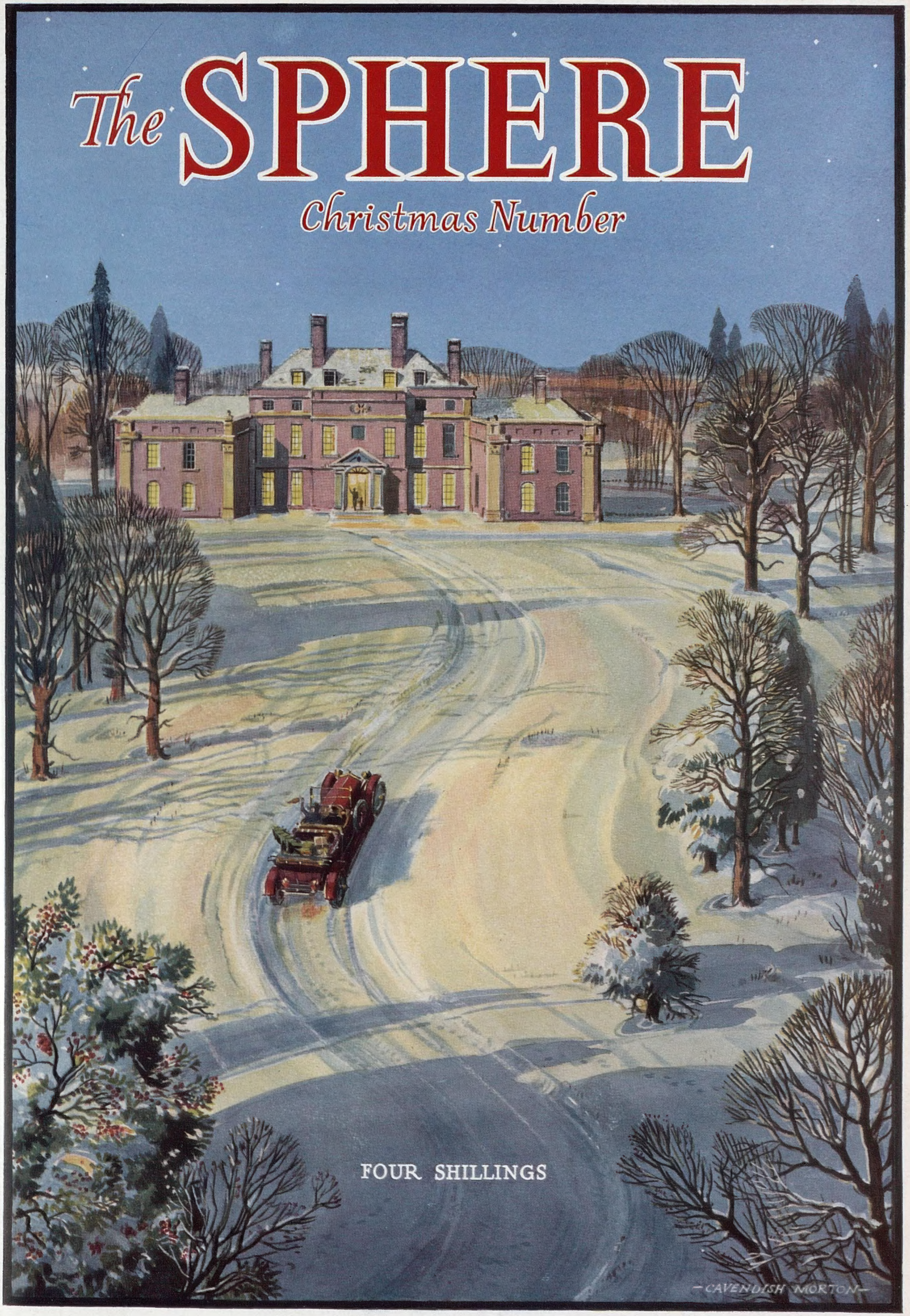
VOL. CCXXXI No. 3006a

THE SPHERE, NOVEMBER 8, 1957
With which are incorporated "BLACK & WHITE" and "GRAPHIC"

The SPHERE

Christmas Number



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Christmas Contents

1957

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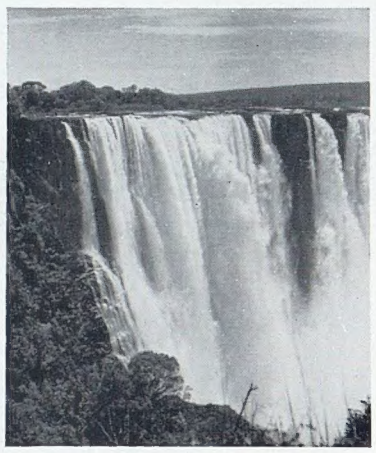

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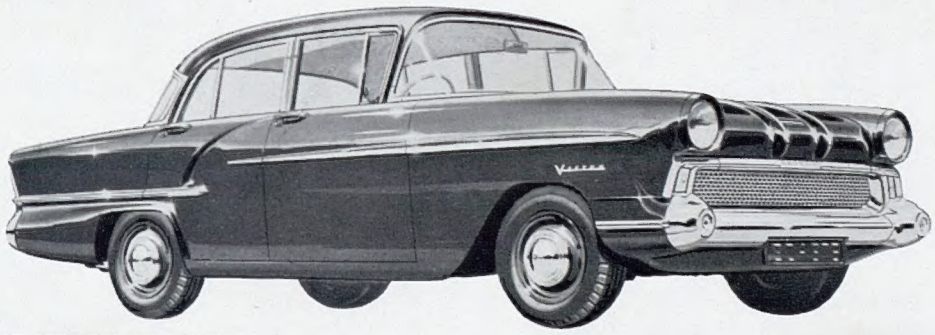

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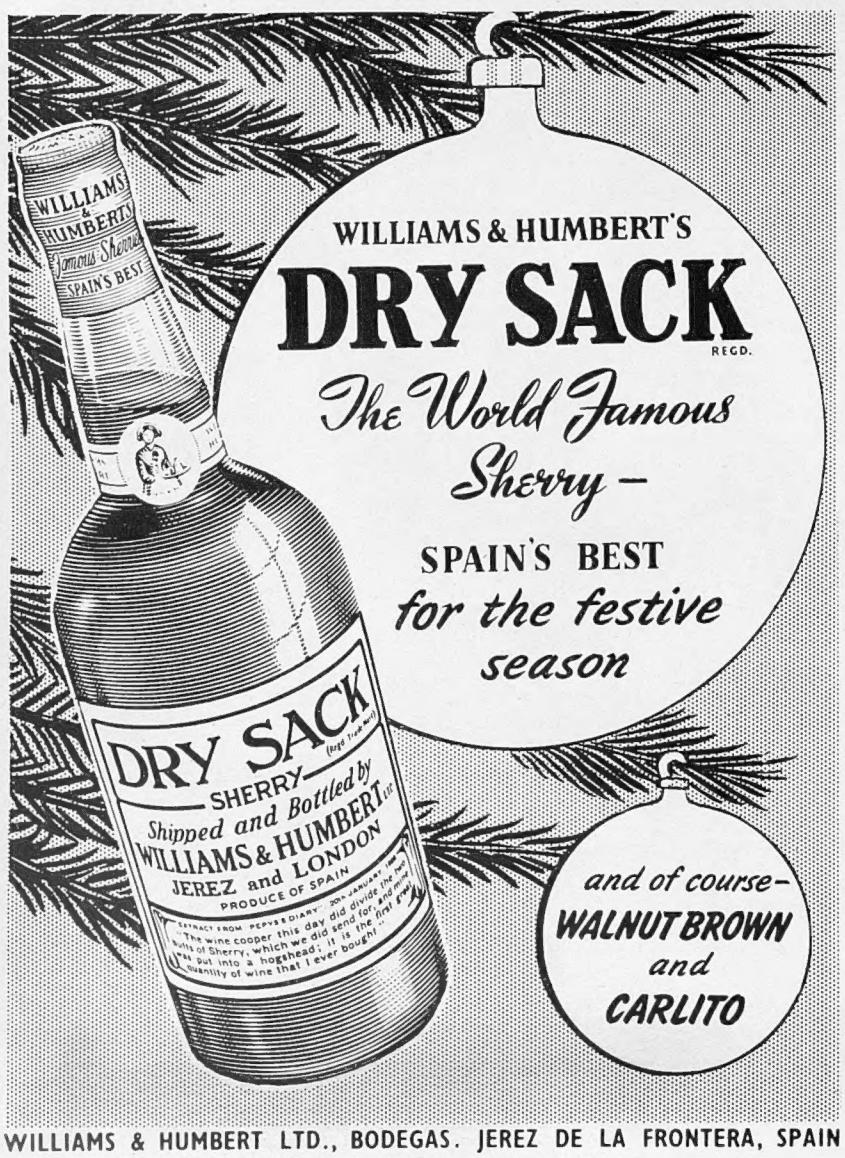

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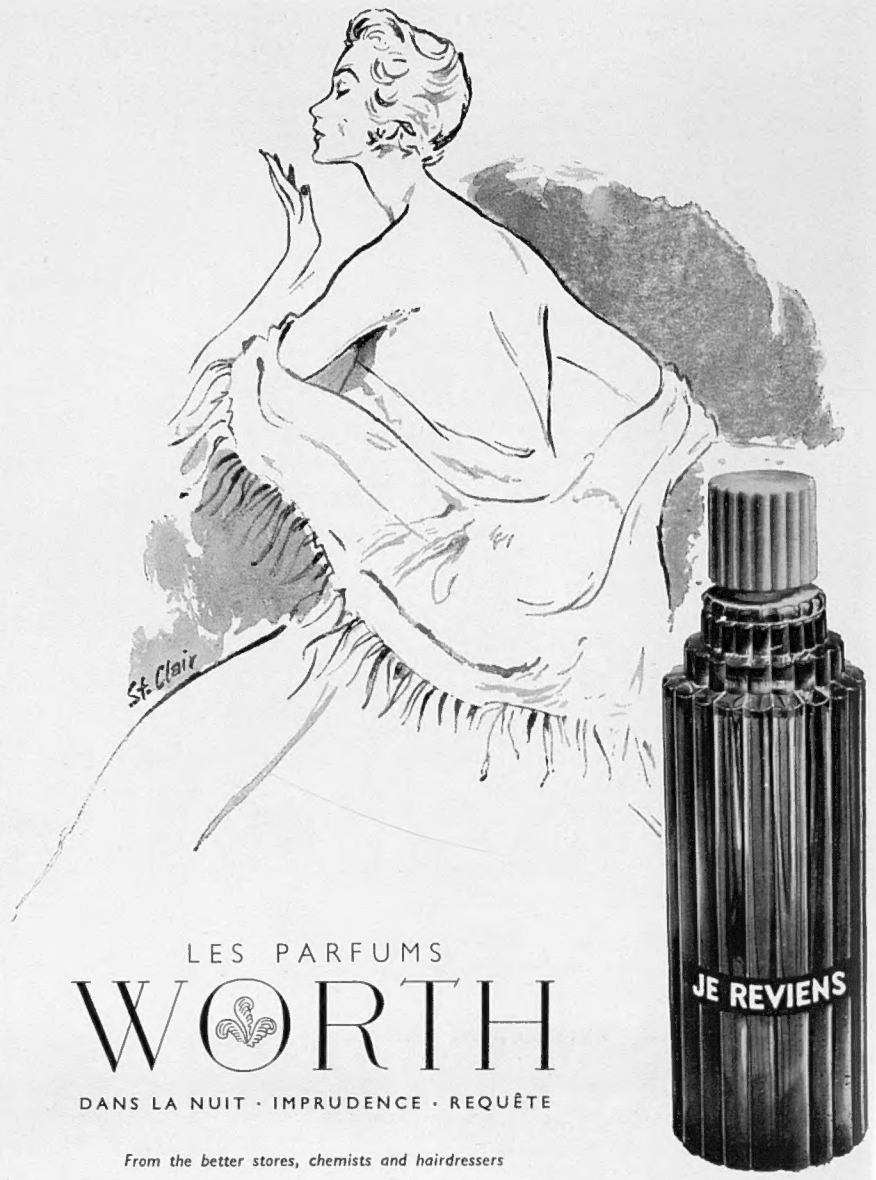

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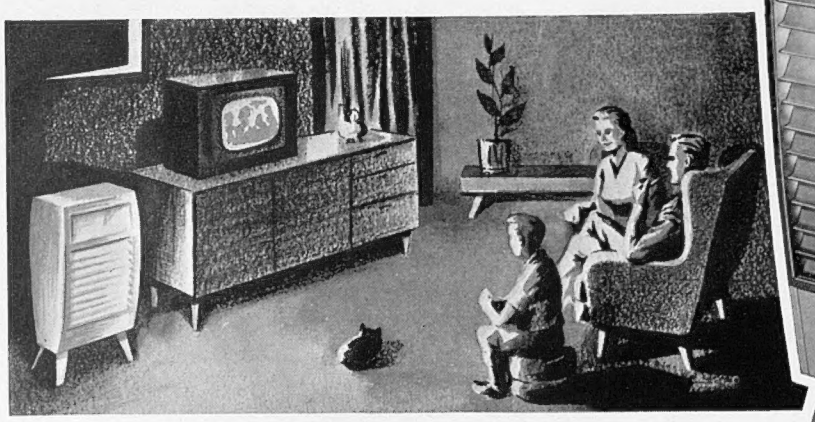

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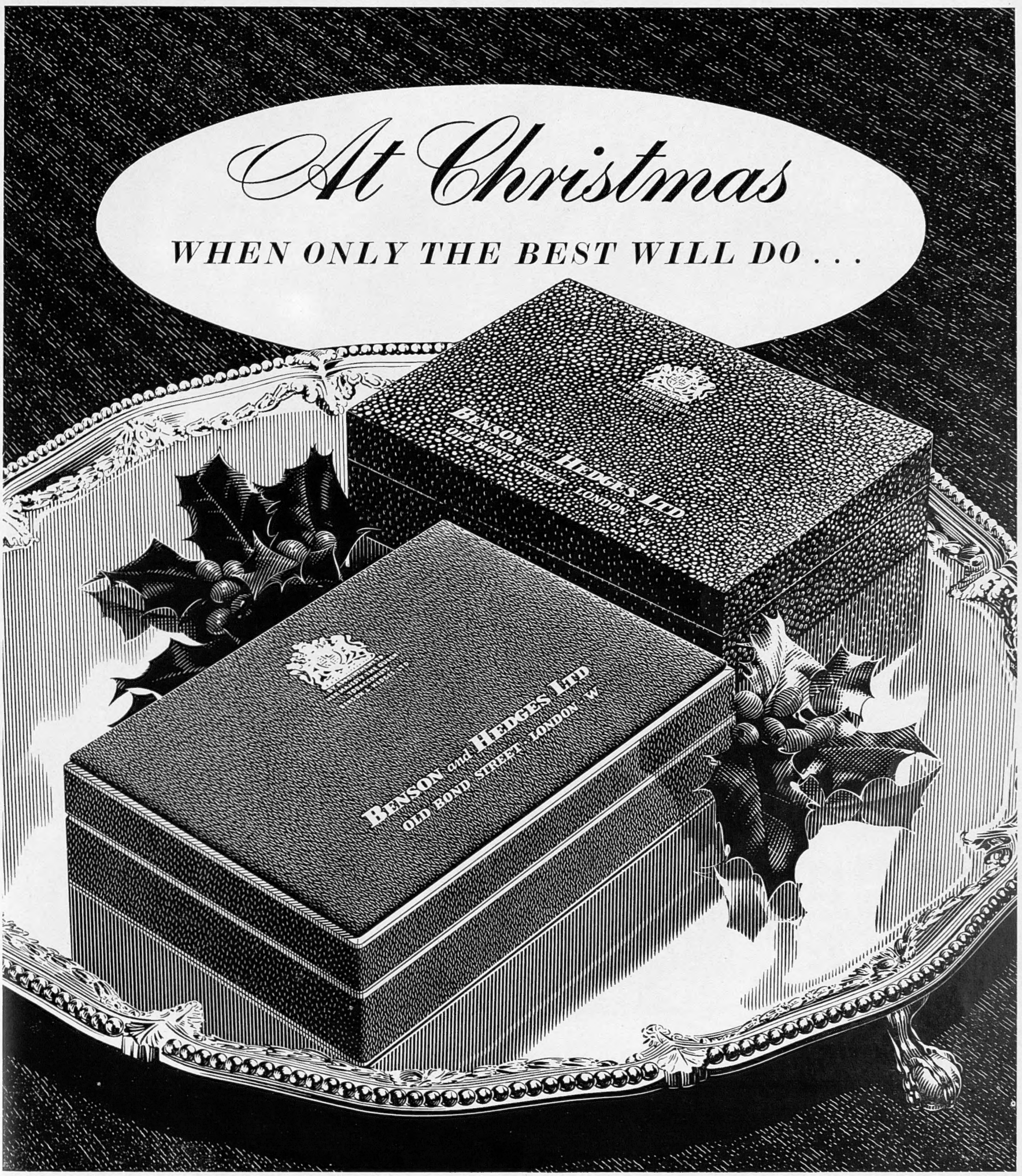

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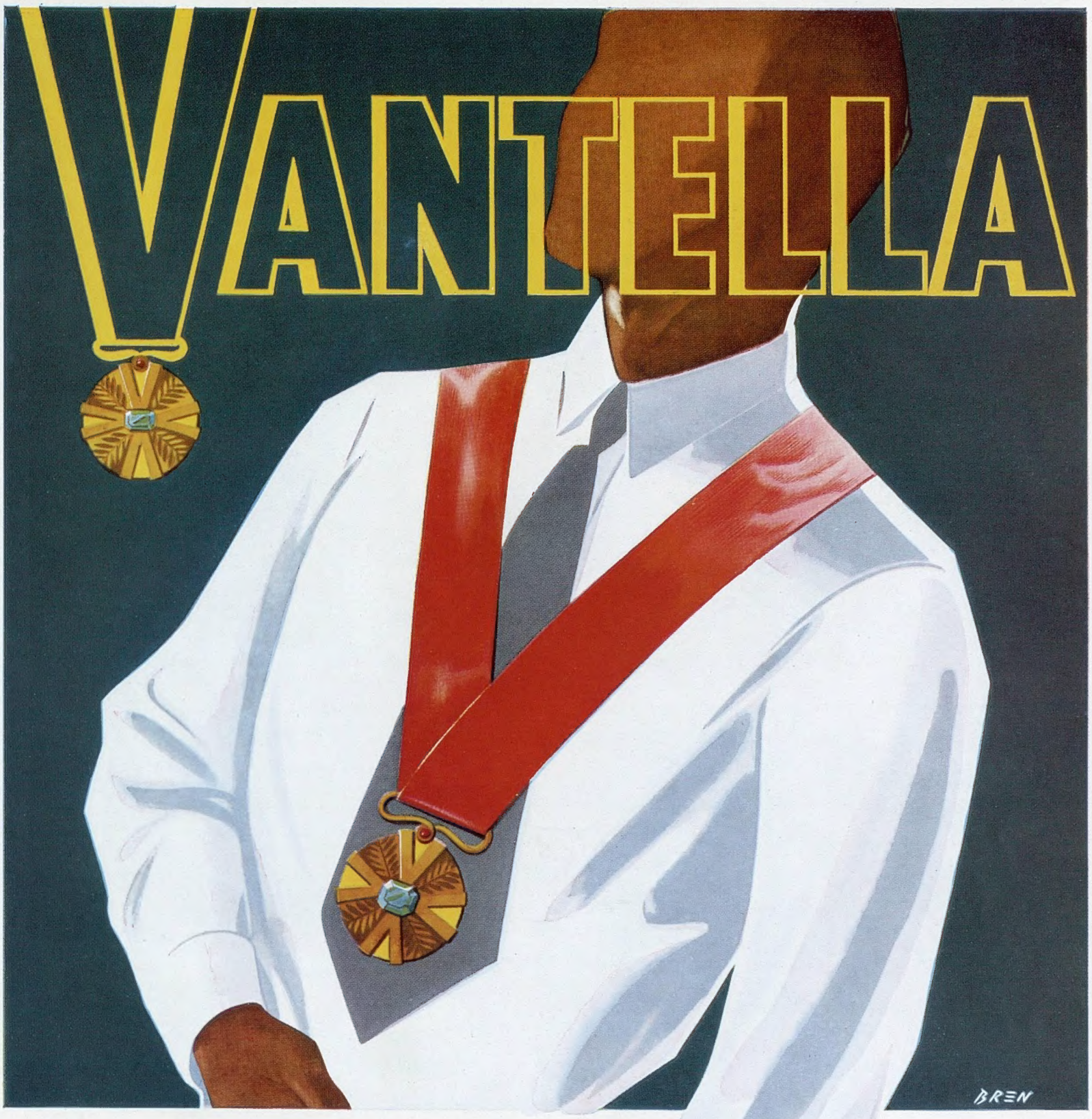

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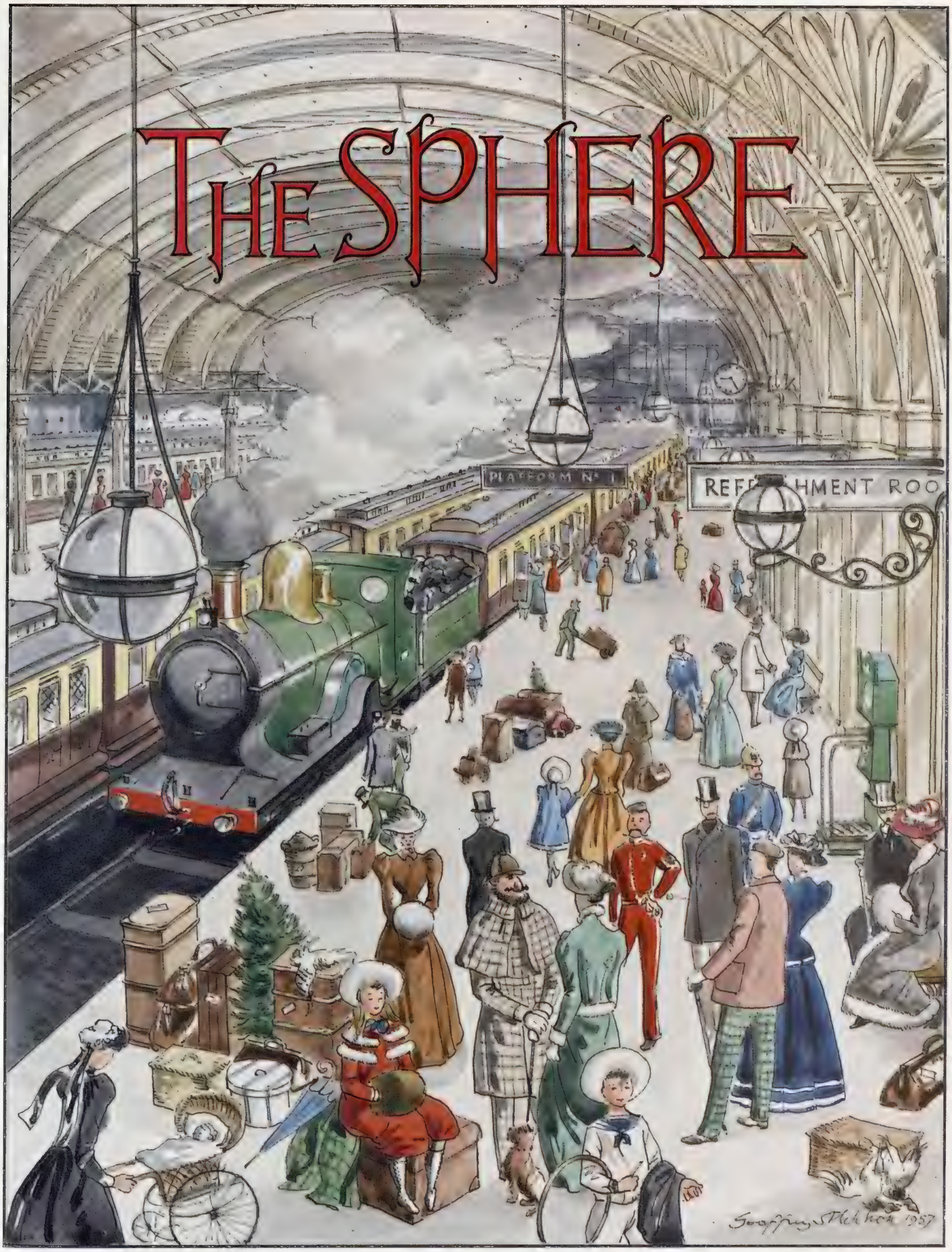


Christmas at Paddington Station in the late 90's

THE scene beneath the arched roof constructed by Brunel presents a splendid cross-section of the fashions and manners of the late Victorians. Even when going for a short Christmas holiday, families travelled with stacks of luggage, large trunks, wicker-baskets, hat-boxes and Gladstone bags. The baby in his bassinet is, of course, wheeled by a nurse. The women and girls carry muffs. Most of the men wear frock coats and top hats or Inverness capes and deerstalkers. The sailor-suited boy carries a hoop. Beyond the two uniformed Volunteers is a sailor in his broad-brimmed straw hat. The porters have green corduroy uniforms and the train is drawn by a large-domed locomotive. The coaches have clerestory roofs and double footboards. Signs of the times are the Cairn terrier (in foreground), a breed just coming into fashion, and the electric lamps.

LONDON IN THE 'NINETIES

In a box at the Old Bedford Music Hall, watching perhaps Bessie Bellwood or Champagne Charlie. The electric lights on the front of the box were a recent installation

Below—

Skating on the Lake in St. James's Park was a popular recreation when the weather permitted. The east front of Buckingham Palace in the background had not yet been refaced

Typical late Victorian saloon bar. Spirits are drawn from porcelain barrels on the shelves and beer from porcelain pumps on the counter, where there is an aspidistra and a stand with fairy cakes. The wallpaper is patterned

Scenes in the "Gay Metropolis." Some would have been Familiar to Everybody; Others Known only to "the Man About Town"

From the Watercolours
by
Geoffrey S. Fletcher

On right—

Along Oxford Street a bus and a number of Hansoms proceed on their leisurely ways. A shave costs twopence at the barber's on the right. On the other side of the street is the entrance to the Oxford Music Hall

On left—

Everyone knew that the interior of 221A Baker Street was like this. Sherlock Holmes sits in his chair smoking his pipe. On the table beside him are the inevitable brown teapot and in the butter-dish the relic of a crime. Violin, nasogene, hypodermic syringe, and many other familiar details are in their proper places

On right—

Anyone who wanted to be in the fashion in the Arts must have visited the Café Royal in Regent Street. Here is a corner of the Domino Room in the first half of the '90's. Sitting at right is Oscar Wilde and walking away from him with a portfolio of drawings is the cadaverous Aubrey Beardsley. Wilde is at the height of his fame, delighting London with his wit in a series of plays (the Queensberry Case did not occur until 1895). If we wait we may see the author of "Lady Windermere's Fan" joined by Whistler, the ubiquitous Frank Harris and, perhaps, a youngish bearded Irishman named G. B. Shaw. Possibly, too, we may get a glimpse of the owner and founder of the café, Mr. Daniel Nichols

Ballet at Covent Garden

The Brilliant Colours of the First Performance of "Petrushka" ever Danced by the Royal Ballet

The curtain first rose on this brilliant scene at the Royal Opera House in London on March 26 this year. Amid the riot of colours of the carnival fair at St. Petersburg in 1830 dance the principals in Igor Stravinsky's famous ballet *Petrushka*. From the left they are the Blackamore (Peter Clegg); the Ballerina (Margot Fonteyn); Petrushka (Alexander Grant) and the Showman dressed up as a magician (Frederick Ashton).

It was a historic occasion for Covent Garden in several ways. The Queen Mother and Princess Margaret were present for a gala performance in aid of charity. The programme gave the information that *Les Sylphides*, which was danced first, was the 206th performance of the ballet at the Royal Opera House by the Royal Opera Company. But it was the first performance there by this Ballet of *Petrushka*.

Fokine's choreography dates to the golden age of Diaghilev, and *Petrushka* was first danced in 1911. The reason for the long delay in the première by the Royal Ballet (formerly the Sadler's Wells Ballet) lies in the supremely high standards demanded by its Director, Dame Ninette de Valois. *Petrushka* may look comparatively easy to dance, but, in fact, it is one of the most difficult in the whole repertoire of Ballet to do really well. It was only this year that Dame Ninette decided that her company was ready to perform it.

Yet a further item of ballet history was recorded on that night in March when Sir Malcolm Sargent raised

Colour photograph by Roger Wood

his baton. The scenery and costumes were those designed by the one and only Alexandre Benois for the original première of 1911. (Indeed, the whole production by Serge Grigoriev and Liubov Tchernicheva was a revival of the original.) Any alterations or improvements in the decor were made on the advice of the artist, who was then aged eighty-five, from his home in Paris. Between the acts a magnificent drop was let down. It represented the Admiralty Square in St. Petersburg at night under snow, full of the deserted booths and swings of the fair, with St. Isaac's Cathedral in the background. It was the first time it had been seen in any theatre, although Benois had designed it in 1911. It was not then used because Diaghilev disapproved of it strongly.

So to the pathetic tale of Petrushka. The fairground is a tumult of colour and sound. Switchbacks, merry-go-rounds, hurdy-gurdies and hawkers jostle beneath the grandfather keeping up his flow of coarse jokes from the top of his hut. An old showman dressed up as a magician announces that he is about to exhibit some animated dolls. Perhaps he is a wizard for these dolls—Petrushka (a youthful simpleton), a blackamore and a ballerina dance with such verve as to seem living creatures.

Within the showman's booth they have their private lives. Petrushka day-dreams, in love with the ballerina and jealous of the blackamore. The latter is a coarse, materially-minded fellow, but the ballerina prefers him. She goes to his compartment, but Petrushka bursts in and provokes a violent quarrel. Outside, the fun of the fair is becoming fast and furious.

Suddenly there are shrieks from the showman's booth, Petrushka rushes out followed by the blackamore, whom the ballerina is trying in vain to restrain. The blackamore strikes Petrushka with his sword, and the simpleton falls to the ground, his skull shattered. The crowd is horrified, refusing to believe they are mere dolls. The police arrest the showman. He quietly picks up Petrushka's corpse and demonstrates that it is nothing but a doll stuffed with sawdust. But is it? When the people have dispersed and the showman is left alone, he sees the ghost of Petrushka rise from the roof of the booth, threatening and mocking him.

The brilliant setting of the finale in Wagner's opera in this year's production of "The Mastersingers" at London's Royal Opera House

OPERA AT COVENT GARDEN

A Great Production of *The Mastersingers*

The principals in the centre of the stage at Covent Garden in the picture above are, from the left, Frederick Dalberg as Pognor; Joan Sutherland (Eva); James Pease (Hans Sachs) and Erich Witte (Walther). The production of *The Mastersingers*, first seen early this year, was especially notable for a number of reasons. Erich Witte not only sang Walther, he was also the producer. Herr Witte is a German, Mr. Pease an American, Miss Sutherland an Australian, and Mr. Dalberg is South African. When to this is added the fact that the conductor, Rafael Kubelik, is Czech, it will be seen that the cast was truly international, although the opera was sung in English. As a background it would be hard to conceive a setting of more colour and splendour than the decor of Georges Wakhevitch. Here is a Nuremberg in the grand style imagined by Wagner. Both pictures on this page were taken on the stage at the Opera House by Ealing Films for their film *Davy*.

The crowning of Walther shows the full splendour of the settings by Georges Wakhevitch for the Wagnerian Fair Ground at Nuremberg

An Infant in Holland in 1689

An Enchanting Portrait by

JOHANNES VOLLEVENS

"Portrait of a Child Aged Eight Months," by Johannes Vollevens, was among the splendid exhibits in the Exhibition of Children Painted by Dutch Artists organised by the Arts Council in Burlington House, London, last year. Dated 1689, it is a portrait of great charm and considerable interest. The composition of child, dog and parrot against the background of glowing red curtain, arch and a glimpse of sky delights the eye. The identity of the model is not known, nor is it possible to say whether it is a boy or a girl. It is unlikely that it was Vollevens' own son, Johannes the Younger (who, in his turn, became a good portraitist), as at the time of the portrait he would have been four years old. The clothes are ornate for a baby, but it is not unusual in Dutch art of the period to find infants painted in fashionable clothes. Especially fascinating is the physique of the child. No one would suggest that he—assuming the model to be male—could win a prize in a baby show. Indeed, from the thick neck, rolls of fat round the shoulders and grotesquely thick arms and legs, one can only suppose that the baby was unusual in appearance, even for 300 years ago. The pose of the infant sitting upright and still, and nonchalantly holding cherries and flowers, must be artificial. Any eight-month-old, normal or not, would have cherries or flowers, or both, in his mouth in a matter of seconds. Or was Vollevens a master in handling children as well as the brush? The artist was born at Geertruidenberg in 1649 and died at The Hague in 1728. He was a pupil of Nicolaas Maes and Jan de Baen. Among his patrons were the Count and Countess of Nassau, whom he painted with their court in 1675.

Reproduced by courtesy of the City Art Gallery, Manchester.

A WINTER NIGHT'S TALE
by Daniel Maclise, R.A.

This charming conversation-piece is almost certainly Daniel Maclise's exhibit in the 1867 Royal Academy Exhibition, which illustrated the quotation from Shakespeare's *King Richard II* (Act V, Scene 1) :

> " In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
> With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
> Of woeful ages long ago betid ; . . ."

In the same year the *Art Journal* commented on it—" A painter of less genius would have been nearer nature. The composition is not well brought together, the lights are scattered. Yet for a certain kind of realism in which Mr. Maclise is unsurpassed, some parts of the picture are absolutely perfect." Except for the slightly stylised, Pre-Raphaelitish faces of the young women, the painter of to-day might wonder in what manner Mr. Maclise could have got " nearer to nature." " A Winter Night's Tale " was bequeathed to the Manchester City Art Gallery in 1908 by Mrs. Rylands, of Longford Hall, Stretford.

TELLING A STORY

Genre Pictures by Two Victorian Royal Academicians

On left—

DOLLY VARDEN
by William Powell Frith, R.A.

The subject was inspired by Charles Dickens' description in Chapter 19 of *Barnaby Rudge*, published in 1841. " The tears once banished gave place to the smiles, and at last Dolly laughed so much, she was fain to lean against a tree, and give vent to her exultation." Frith painted six versions of " Dolly Varden." That at the Victoria and Albert Museum differs in the pose which is reversed, with the hand on the left hip. In another picture, Dolly Varden is admiring the bracelet given her by Miss Haredale.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees of the Tat Gallery, London.

The Long Dragon in Mereham, where the locals soon guessed that the newcomer to their village was " a man with a mystery "

The Unforgivable Choice

A Short Story

by Lord Dunsany

With Illustrations by Tom Taylor

"AND you are Mr. Hulton?" said the reporter in the little village of Mereham.

"Yes, I am," said Mr. Hulton.

"And you live in this village?"

"Have done so all my life."

"And you saw the body?"

"Yes."

"And I understand," the reporter went on, "that his dog was watching over him?"

"Yes, there was a dog there."

"And he stayed by the body, and would not come away?"

"Yes, that is so."

"There should be quite a story in that."

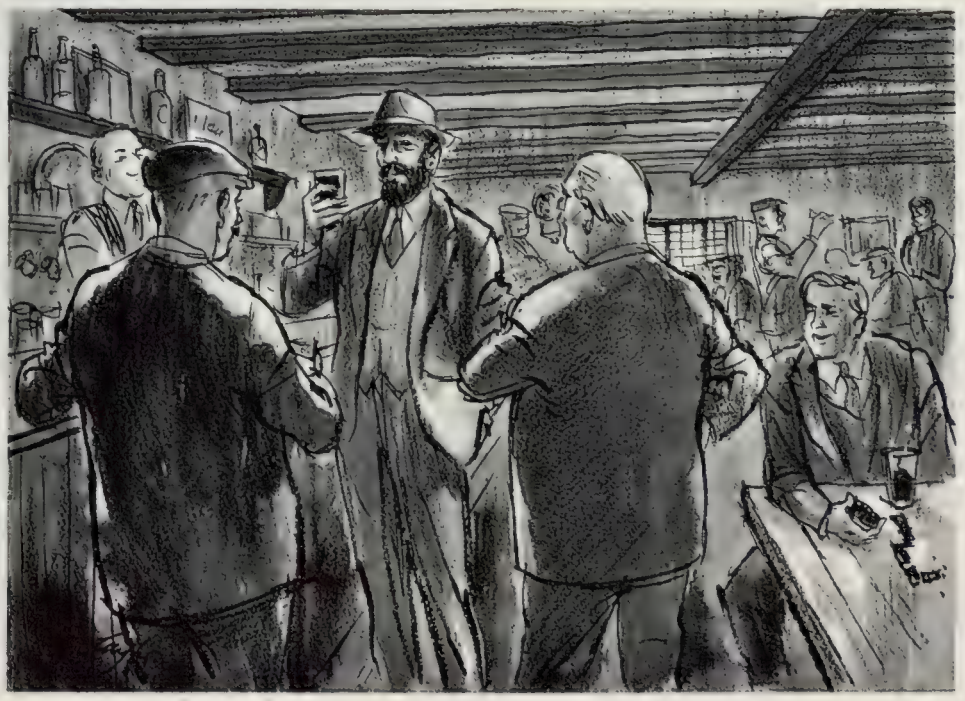
"Well, yes, in a way."

"Perhaps you would come inside and sit down," said the reporter. "And then you could tell me the story."

"I don't mind if I do," said Hulton.

For they were standing outside the Long Dragon, and they went into a room at the back of the bar, to which two words seemed to gain them entrance and to cause drinks to be brought and put on the table beside them. The two magic words were "the Press." And there while Hulton sometimes sipped at a glass of stout and talked on, and sometimes answered questions, he told this story, which when coherently put together by the reporter, went like this.

There arrived one day in the village of Mereham a total stranger who had just bought a villa at the edge of it, with gardens and pleasant lawns running down to a little lake, from which the village was said to have got its name. So quiet and inconspicuous he was, that one would not dream there was any mystery about him. And yet one mystery there was, which there was not about any other man or any woman in that village or in either of the villages on each side of it, and that was that, after gossip had said its last word throughout Mereham, and that took several weeks, nobody could tell anything of his origin, either who he was, what he did, or where he had come from. He was quiet and friendly, he was in the early forties, he wore a beard; nobody had much more than that to say about him, except that they all summed him up as being a very respectable man. He seemed interested in respectability, to be really fond of it, as other men were fond of their various hobbies. It showed in what he did, what he said, what he liked, a wistful yearning, almost, for respectability. And one thing the simple rustics of that village found out very quickly, and that was that he was sincere in his likings, sincere in his dislike of gambling, however mild, in his dislike of more than two glasses of beer, in his attendance at church, and in such philosophy as appeared from his conversation, or, if philosophy be too big a word for it, his attitude towards life.



" In his quiet way he was hail-fellow-well-met with everyone, . . ."

He would often have a glass of beer with others in the Long Dragon at evening and was soon friends with everybody he knew, and got to know more and more as the weeks went by. Only one thing they felt a little sore about at the Long Dragon, and indeed throughout the village, and that was that he should grudge them one thing that they all would have relished. For here was obviously a man with a mystery, and yet he would not share it with anyone. Drinks he would stand to any of them, but when the very air of the Long Dragon seemed mellow, and when the time had come to enjoy the full savour of whatever mystery so completely concealed his origin—

(*Continued on following pages*)

e

THE UNFORGIVABLE CHOICE

(*Continued from previous page*)

not a hint from him, not a word. Had they liked him less they would almost have called him greedy for keeping a mystery all to himself. The guesses of gossip supplied substitute mysteries, telling the story of his life in their own way, but there was nothing to corroborate any guess. One guess, based upon nothing more than a certain look which someone once saw in the eyes of the stranger as he heard the sound of a distant train coming towards Mereham was that he had done some work on one of the great railways that cross America and made his money in that, but that was a guess that led to no more than the rest, and they all led to nothing.

In his quiet way he was hail-fellow-well-met with everyone, and many came to his house at evening to play draughts with him, and sometimes dominoes, though never any game of cards, for any means of gambling, however low the stakes, he quite honestly disliked. And often he would throw darts with them in the inn. He was the greatest help to the vicar, subscribing to any good cause about which the vicar approached him, and on a scale that nobody else in the parish could afford. To a raffle in aid of a charity he would not subscribe, anxiously apologising to the vicar for his inherent distaste for anything even so remotely connected with gambling. No one ever heard him swear, or use any word that men used for the purpose of swearing. He was never sanctimonious, merely feeling a mild dislike for any form of riotousness, trickery or dishonesty. And, as this story mentions before, one thing those villagers could detect with absolute certainty in all men, even in those far better educated than themselves, was sincerity. He was a respectable man; he chose respectability for himself and he liked it in others: they soon found that out in Mereham.

About such a man there may seem little to tell; no one could call him dull for leading a quiet life and a good one, but a story about him might have been dull but for one thing, and that was that this quiet, friendly man seemed to carry a fear about with him. A sudden noise, even somebody ringing his doorbell, or anything unexpected, would bring a swift look of alertness to his eyes, and from playing a game of dominoes with a glass of beer on the table beside him he would suddenly look like a hunter, or like a soldier suspecting an ambush, or a scout in a hostile country; then he would smile slightly, utter a little sigh and become all engrossed in the dominoes again. This did not happen only once, and Mr. Hulton, among others, who used often to have supper at his house and play draughts or dominoes after, felt quite sure of that fear. Once Hulton even tested him by dropping a pebble from his pocket, and always there came the sudden change from that quiet easy man to one with the eyes and poise of a leader of armed men in a difficult country. The face altered strangely little, but the eyes and the attitude did.

Soon that alertness would always give way to the dominoes player or the kindly host over his supper, as though a danger had passed. Hulton was a farmer of two or three hundred acres all along one side of the village, only just across the mere that lapped at the edge of Jack Smith's lawns. That was the name he had, a name as inconspicuous as himself and revealing as little to anyone of his origin. He lived with a cook, and a maid to look after the whole house, and often got in a charwoman, whom he paid very well, to save the maid too much work. And he kept a cat, which had one day strolled into his house and, seeing no dog there, settled down and was soon encouraged by Jack Smith to stay. He seemed to want something, Hulton thought, on which to expend his friendliness, and the cat seemed to answer that purpose. It was not that he preferred a cat to a dog, Hulton thought, but rather that he had left a dog behind in the country that he had come from, and he gathered that he had been fond of the dog and did not like to supplant him, or felt that no other dog could fill his place. That was what Hulton thought. And then Hulton remembers somebody's chance remark, as chance remarks do get remembered, just as one speck of soot will stick on one's nose while a thousand others float by.

" He had found Jack Smith standing before him with his hands drooped at his sides,

They were talking of Mr. Jack Smith, as they often did, one evening at the Long Dragon, and someone, hunting the mystery of him still, wondered if it was his own beard, when one man made the remark: " Yes it is. But it isn't his own nose." And that remark had stuck in Hulton's memory. And one scrap of plausibility helped to keep it there, and that was that the extraordinary remark at least explained why Jack Smith's face remained so immobile even when his eyes flashed and they and his whole attitude showed him to be all alert. If there was anything artificial about his face, that might account for this strange look of alertness and somnolence that sometimes came down on the same man.

Hulton got to know him very well and became his friend and would have liked to help him to oppose that fear; yet no remark of Hulton's would ever draw the least hint from Jack Smith of what it was he feared, until one day when it all poured out and he told Hulton the story. And that day Hulton remembers very well, with every vivid detail. He had gone up to Jack Smith's house to have supper with him, and had found Jack Smith standing before him with his hands drooped at his sides, instead of the welcoming handshake which he had always had from Jack Smith, and his mouth was slightly open and he looked utterly helpless; and when he spoke, as he did by way of apology for giving no welcome, all he said was, " I am a dead man." And Hulton tried to cheer him and could not do it, and then he got him to sit down, and they both sat at the table at which they used to play dominoes, and Jack Smith began to talk.

He began to talk about the law, and how murderers, both in England and the United States, though sentenced to death, were often reprieved before they went to the gallows or chair; and from that he went on to tell that one thing was never forgiven and one death sentence never reprieved, and that was where any man had belonged to a gang in the country he came from and, having made a few hundred thousand dollars by wicked means, gave up his bad ways and chose a respectable life.

In fact, " murder may often be pardoned by the law," said Jack Smith, " but respectability by gangsters never." And he had been one of such a gang and he had made at least a hundred thousand pounds out of it, and it was not just because he had made his pile that he wished to desert his pals, but because he had come to hate murder and robbery, and the money had given him the opportunity to lead a respectable life for which he had always longed. For in spite of his past, which he admitted was black as could be, he liked respectability now, and that was the one thing of all things that a gang never forgave. The penalty

" Jack Smith " was unrecognisable, but, nevertheless, one of the gang tracked him down

instead of the welcoming handshake which he had always had from Jack Smith, and his mouth was slightly open and he looked utterly helpless; . . ."

for turning respectable was always death. "And now," said Jack Smith, "I am a dead man."

"No, no," said Hulton. "They'll never find you, once you have crossed the Atlantic."

"Let me tell you," said Jack Smith. And Hulton was silent and listened. And Jack Smith said, "Never mind what my name was or where we worked. Our headquarters were near Chicago, but we worked as far as the Coast, I mean California. We robbed trains. You needn't tell me how wrong that was. I know that well. I have lain awake through long nights over it, thinking how bad it was and wanting to be respectable. I resolved to give it up and to leave the gang. That would not have been possible in the ordinary way: the gang saw to that. But I had heard of a man who could alter faces, alter them thoroughly, a man who had given handsome faces after the war to airmen who had had their own faces burned away. I went to that man and stayed with him for some time, and it hurt a lot every day, but not so much as thinking by night over my past life. And when I had paid him ten thousand dollars and left him, nobody in the world could have recognised Jack Smith for a member of that gang of train-robbers. My own face had gone like my name."

"Why, then, you're safe," said Hulton. "They could never recognise you, even if they came here."

"They have come here," said Jack Smith.

"Here?" gasped Hulton.

"One of them has," said Jack Smith. "He is at the Long Dragon now."

"But you said no man can recognise you," said Hulton cheerily.

"No man can," said Jack Smith.

"Then you have nothing to worry about, old fellow," said Hulton.

"Let me tell you," said Jack Smith. "They would have sent a man to every country in Europe, and to South America, too. Your Scotland Yard seem pretty keen on hunting down murder, but they are nothing to one of those gangs if they have any reason to suspect respectability. That is a choice they will never forgive.

"They would have known I should clear out of the States. I had slipped away at once, not even waiting to take my dog with me. But they soon knew. One of them came to England. He would have searched every village, carefully making inquiries about every stranger who had arrived about the time I did."

"But that would take a long time," said Hulton.

"They don't grudge time," said Jack Smith. "And they have all the money they need, and can get plenty more, but they won't have one of the gang turning respectable. It took him a long time, but he got here at last, and now he is in Mereham, talking to them all in the Long Dragon."

"But he'll get nothing from that," said Hulton. "No one knows anything here of who you are or where you came from, no one at all." And again Hulton tried to cheer him, quoting his own words to him, that he could not be recognised, and telling him that the gangster would soon pass on, if he was going to search every village. But there was in Jack Smith's attitude and his voice and in all except his immobile face, the expression of a rabbit that, however far behind him it be, knows there is a stoat on his tracks. Hulton suggested staying locked up in his house, going for a while to the seaside, and many other things, but Jack Smith seemed helpless and hopeless. To cure that dreadful depression Hulton suggested his going for a walk, partly for the sake of the open air, but chiefly so that Jack Smith might learn how safe it was to walk abroad with his altered face. For it was clear to Hulton that, if he had got away from the United States with that face, it really was unrecognisable, as Jack Smith had said.

Well, Jack Smith gave a sigh and went for a walk over the fields alone on the other side of the mere, still with that air of a doomed rabbit knowing that there is a stoat on his tracks. He seemed bent on going alone, so Hulton stood by the door of the house and watched him go, and that is the last that he saw of Jack Smith alive. His face was unrecognisable by any man, as he said. But he had left his dog behind him when he had fled from Chicago, and the gangster had his dog with him now. And the dog must have come gambolling up to Jack Smith, wagging a welcoming tail. Hulton heard one shot, and knew what that would have been, and he went over the fields the way that Jack Smith had gone, and found him lying dead with his old dog guarding him and not letting Hulton come near.

Jack Smith was lying dead with his old dog guarding him and not letting Hulton come near

The Christmas Party

Illustrated by William McLaren

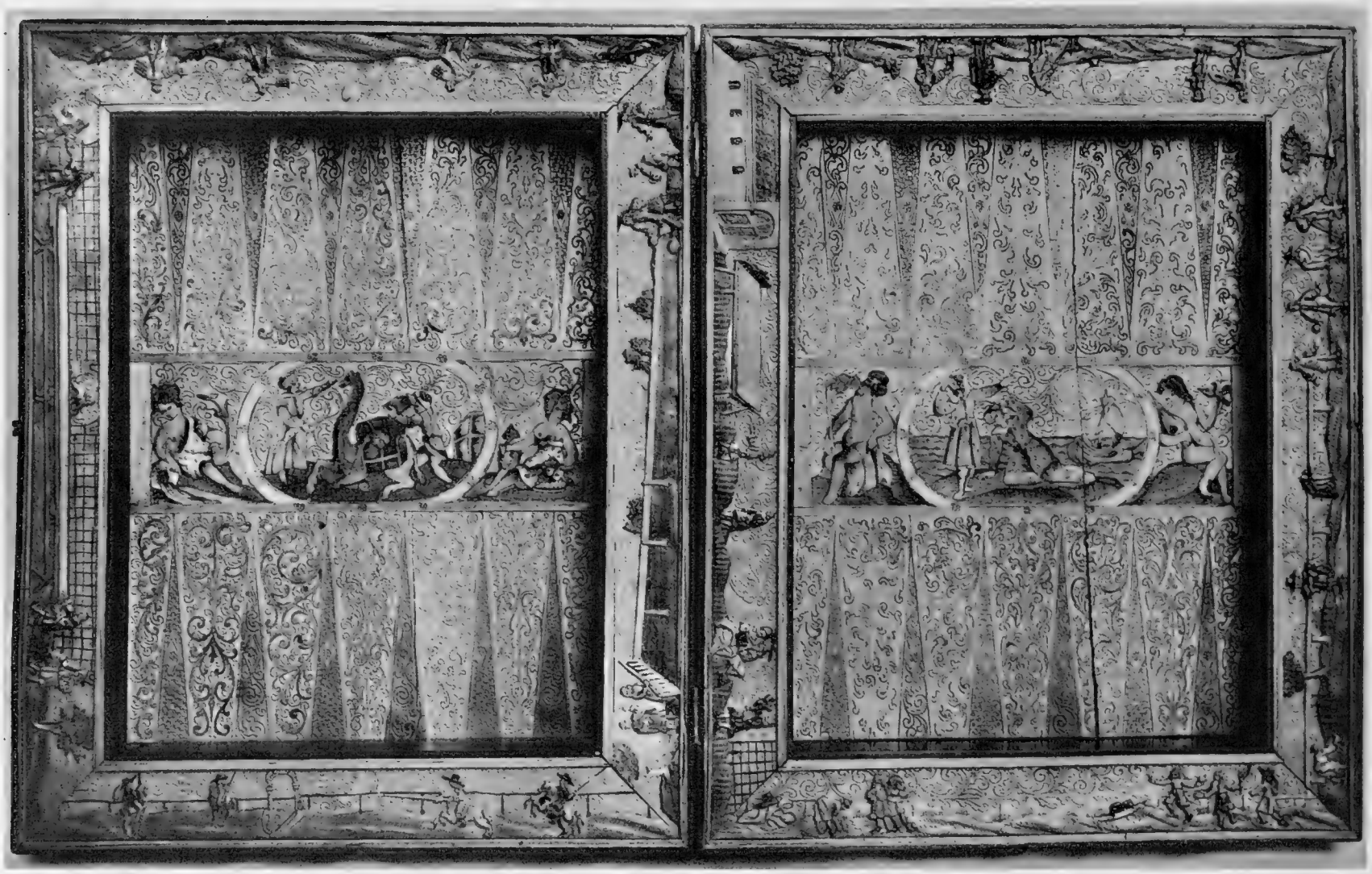
Thomas Love Peacock in his gothic novel 'Crotchet Castle,' published in 1831, describes the Christmas banquet given in the twelfth century manner by Mr. Chainmail for his guests, neighbours, tenants and domestics. '"Old hospitality, old wine, old ale,— all the images of Old England...." ' says the Rev. Dr. Folliot, and he might have added, "such food!" The dishes were brought in grand procession. The boar's head, garnished with rosemary, with a citron in its mouth led the van. Then came tureens of plum-porridge; then a series of turkeys, and in the midst of them, an enormous sausage which it required two men to carry. Then came geese and capons, tongues and hams, the ancient glory of the Christmas pie, a gigantic plum-pudding, a pyramid of minced pies, and a baron of beef bringing up the rear. "It is something new under the sun" said the great divine, as he sat down, "to see a great dinner without fish." '

A piece of the dark ages the company did not bargain for was an assault on

at Chainmail Hall

the castle by a discontented rabble. Mr Chainmail and his friends repulsed the invaders with arms that had served until that moment for ornament. The party duly reassembled after the hazard, the sole casualty being Mr Firedamp who missed his way and plunged into the moat. The Reverend Doctor greeted him with "'Punch, sir, punch: there is no antidote like punch'" Later, in conversation with Mr Chainmail, he suggested that the good old custom of singing after supper might be revived. "My Susan" replied Chainmail, "will set the example, after she has set that of joining in the rustic dance, according to good customs long departed" The young lady of the mansion took her harp, and following the reverend gentleman's suggestion, sang a song of the twelfth century called 'Florence and Blanchefior.'

The eccentric party continued long after the ladies had retired and ended in the small hours, the vaulted roof was echoing to a mellifluous concert of noses, from the clarionet of the waiting boy at one end of the hall, to the double bass of the Reverend Doctor at the other.'



The seventeenth-century Games Box, opened to show the backgammon board. Figures round the edges, carved in relief and coloured, are engaged in eight different games

Enlargements of the panels show (left) a camel in marquetry being loaded with Eastern merchandise and (right) exotic figures waving to (or being astonished by) a ship

A 17th-Century Games Board

The chessboard side of the box has animals inlaid on the black squares, and flowers on the white squares

The ancient and demanding game of chess did not inspire or encourage frivolous decoration of the boards on which it was played. But when backgammon, which was also known as the tables or tric-trac, came into fashion and appealed to players more luxurious and less intellectual, boards of increasing splendour were required. Games boards or " tables " with inlaid reversible tops, one side for backgammon and the other for chess or draughts, were made with fine flourishes of decoration and complex marquetry of unusual woods and ivory.

This one, which can be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum, is unusually interesting as well as beautiful. Ebonised pearwood, satinwood, boxwood, tulip and other woods have been used for it, and the decoration involves carving, punched designs, and painting as well as marquetry. On the other sides from the backgammon table are a chess board and a board marked out for the game of merelles (also known as nine men's morris), which dates back to the fourteenth-century, and has recently had something of a revival.

The Oriental scenes in the middle of the backgammon table were evidently inspired by the early trading ventures of the Dutch and English East India Companies, and help to date the board in the early seventeenth century. The craftsman responsible seems not to have been very well informed about camels but he has caught the excitement of rich merchandise and the romance of richly-dressed men of the georgeous East marvelling at an adventurous sailing vessel. The undress of the supporting figures seems to hint at another perennial source of romance—the exotic naked native or lotus-eating child of nature.

The coloured bas-reliefs around the edges of the backgammon board have been more exactly observed. Here the carver worked with his eye on the object. Each of these scenes represents a game—aristocratic or popular. Some of the players are dressed in clothes of a Dutch flavour, which may be why this board has been thought to come from the Low Countries. But several of the games are recognisably English and best known to us from legislation introduced to put them down because they interfered with the practice of archery.

The first panel on the left shows shovelboard being played and is the only contemporary representation of the game I have been able to discover. Next, going clock-wise, is a version of balloon ball or bat and ball. The third game is thought to be kayles, though the pins in that game were usually knocked down with a thrown club. It *might* be a variant of bowls which *could* be an ancestor of billiards. The fourth sport is plain enough—tilting at the quintain.

Around the right-hand half of the board can be seen first bagatelle, next knur and spel or trap-ball, then ninepins or skittles, and, lastly and dubiously, tennis.

Frederick Laws

The counters could be used for draughts, geese or other games

The Story of Mary Bryant

And Her Remarkable Adventures in England and Australia

On May 13, 1787, two men-of-war, three store ships and six transports sailed from Spithead down-Channel. In the transports, battened below hatches, were crowded convicts in chains, sentenced to long terms of transportation. Their destination was Botany Bay, in New Holland, in the remote Antipodes. No one by the wildest stretch of imagination could have foreseen that this cargo of misery was to become known in Australian history as the " First Fleet " which carried the first settlers to the new continent. Nor would anyone have believed that among them was a woman who was to carry out a feat unparalleled in the annals of British seamanship.

In separate transports and unaware that they were fellow-voyagers were Mary Braund and her lover, William Bryant. Both came from the West Country. Young Bryant had been sentenced for smuggling. Mary, apparently, for helping him in a daring attempt at a gaol-break. She had visited him in prison, changed clothes with him, and Bryant had walked out, leaving Mary in his place. Unfortunately the deceit was soon discovered and Bryant re-arrested. Mary was aged nineteen and a girl of considerable charm and individuality. That they were unconscious pioneers of the British Commonwealth was due to Lord Sydney, the Home Secretary. Because of American Independence, criminals sentenced to transportation could no longer be sent across the North Atlantic. The result was a most serious overcrowding of British prisons. Until Sydney had the brilliant inspiration of transporting them to the newly-discovered Antipodes. Was there ever a better example of the acquisition of the British Empire by absence of mind ?

Mary Bryant was in the *Charlotte*, of 335 tons, with over 100 male and female convicts on board. As the ship left Start Point behind, a guard remarked to her : " That 's the last you 'll ever see of England." Only her unbreakable spirit and sometimes superhuman courage enabled her to prove him wrong and return to see that view after an epic of adventure which included voyages totalling 30,000 miles and incidents of hope and despair mixed in dramatic abundance. The officers of the *Charlotte* did what they could, within the limits of necessary strict discipline, to relieve the miserable lot of the prisoners. In this they reflected the humane spirit of the fleet Commander, Captain Arthur Phillip, R.N. Two took a special interest in Mary. One was Lieutenant Charles Stuart, of the Marines, who supplied the guards for the ships. He quickly noticed that she was superior to the ordinary run of female convicts. The other was John White, the expedition's surgeon. To the latter she soon confessed that she was pregnant. The kindly doctor did all he could to ameliorate her wretched circumstances. When the child was born in Rio

(*Continued on following pages*)

THE STORY OF MARY BRYANT

(*Continued from previous page*)

de Janeiro—it was a girl and named Charlotte after the ship—she told him that she was unmarried and that the father was William Bryant. She had heard by now there was a W. Bryant in another of the ships. Could he find out if he was her Will? Dr. White was able to establish that it was the man, and assured Mary that he had seen him and that Will wanted to marry her. Although there was no chance of them meeting until they reached their destination, this knowledge buoyed up Mary's spirits through the gales, calms, heat and cold and all the other inevitable accompaniments of the voyage.

Christmas 1787 found the fleet sailing along the south-east coast of the Unknown Land. In January 1788 Captain Phillip went ashore in Botany Bay, at Port Jackson, and all unknowing, became the first Governor-General of Australia. Exactly thirty-six weeks after leaving Portsmouth, Mary landed with her baby. Both soon had the arms of Bryant round them, and since the fleet carried a chaplain, Will and Mary were quickly married.

But there was no time for personal rejoicing. The expedition had been hopelessly ill-equipped to found even a convict colony. Swindled by the contractors in England, the fleet's food supply rapidly dwindled. Housed in crude huts round Port Jackson, the people passed from facing famine to famine itself. Bryant was a fisherman by trade and spent long hours at sea to help keep the community from dying from starvation. Life was not made any easier for him and Mary by the birth of another child—a boy whom they named Emmanuel. But Mary refused to accept the idea of spending the rest of her life in such a hell on earth. There was no possibility of repatriation even when her seven-year sentence expired. The only way out lay in escape. When the news of Captain Bligh's epic voyage of 3,000 miles in an open boat from the mutinous *Bounty* to Timor, in the Dutch East Indies, filtered through to Port Jackson, Mary's determination was redoubled. If he could do it, she argued, so could she, even though her two children must be taken on the escape. The question was one of how to do it.

The answer was provided by a Dutch captain, Smit, who put into Port Jackson with much-needed supplies in December 1790. He fancied himself as a lady-killer, and Mary soon charmed him into conspiracy. Smit refused to consider taking them as stowaways in his own ship, but he did allow that the voyage to Kupang, in Timor, *could* be made in Bryant's boat. That was enough for Mary. With Will she drew the captain more and more into their plans, obtaining from him a rough chart of the course, a compass, a quadrant and supplies of necessary provisions. Seven other fishermen convicts agreed to join in the hazardous undertaking.

On the night of March 27, 1791, the eight men, one woman and two infants, embarked from Port

Illustrations by Millar Watt

Jackson in a six-oared cutter fitted with mast and sail. With muffled oars they rowed away until clear of the harbour, then hoisted sail and began the long journey up the unexplored east coast of the continent of Australia. At first all went well. They hugged the shore and were able to land frequently to replenish their stores with fruit, water, fish and turtle, and rest children and adults. But there were two ever-present dangers. One that they would be driven too far out to sea, lose the land and go off coast. The second that ashore they would be attacked by natives. Erroneously they believed them to be cannibals, and whenever they encountered them—which became more and more frequent—they hastily retreated out to the sea.

The days went by. Both the elements and their own tempers began to affect the morale of the band of mariners who were making history. Will Bryant was the nominal captain, but his authority was weakening and it was really Mary who kept them going on and on. On the sixtieth day they reached Cape York, the northernmost point of Australia. Here they had to turn due west through the Straits of Endeavour to run to Timor and Kupang. Now they must commit themselves to the open sea. There was a good wind behind but this was the greatest gamble of their dangerous voyage. Twelve hundred miles with a rough chart under an overcast, sunless and starless sky. After a week, soaked to the skin and battered by the wind and waves, they were all in profound dejection. Then on the ninth day Mary raised the cry of "Land!" A few hours later they were in Kupang. They had sailed or rowed 3,254 miles in sixty-nine days.

Here the story should have a happy ending. At first it seemed it had. The Dutch, used to receiving shipwrecked mariners, made the Bryants welcome and appeared to accept their story of being themselves survivors from a wreck. But gradually Dutch suspicions were aroused and were confirmed by the arrival of a party of genuinely shipwrecked British sailors under Captain Edwardes, R.N. He quickly broke down the Bryants' story and discovered the truth.

The voyage home for the Bryants and their party began under the most savage conditions. Only Mary, because of the children, was allowed to be free of chains and of the fetid, dark, steaming dungeon constructed for the others on a Dutch East Indiaman. At journey's end the gallows probably awaited them. Did they want to survive? Will Bryant died in Batavia and so did the baby Emmanuel, who had so sturdily withstood the open-boat voyage. By the time they reached the Cape three of the other men had died or committed suicide.

But Mary was still undefeated. She and Charlotte were transferred to H.M.S. *Gorgon*. On board were several passengers returning to England from Botany Bay. They, of course, knew of her escape. She was regarded as something of a celebrity and not too rigorously confined. This amelioration may have been due to Lieutenant Stuart, the Marine officer of *Charlotte*, who was going home. He appears to have been strongly attracted to her. One more blow befell Mary before she again saw Start Point and her native shores. Her daughter Charlotte died and was buried at sea.

With the four other survivors from the Botany Bay party, Mary was taken to Newgate Prison, in London. Needless to say, her story was headline news in the papers. The English could not fail to show sympathy in such an epic of the sea, and particularly in the woman concerned in it. On May 2, 1793, Mary received a free pardon. This meant that someone of sufficient influence must have taken the trouble to put the facts of the case before the King. Some say it was no less a person than James Boswell; others that it was "a gentleman of high rank in the Army" who drove her away from Newgate in his carriage (could it have been Stuart?).

At all events, from the time of her release Mary disappeared into quiet obscurity. If that was her wish, few will deny it her. She had shown greater courage and determination than most of her fellow-countrymen, male or female, of her own day or any other.

" Knee Deep "—an engraving by J. Harris from the painting by C. Cooper Henderson—one of a set of six entitled " Fores's Coaching Incidents "

" Flooded "—another of " Fores's Coaching Incidents." The set was published during the 1840's

" Stuck Fast "—this print of the set of six was published on November 1, 1843

COACHING INCIDENTS

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Charles Cooper Henderson (1803-1877) was educated at Winchester and, after leaving, began studying for the bar. He did not practise, however, and early made a name for his sporting and coaching pictures. He was also an accomplished etcher and of the many of his pictures which were published by Fores, some were engraved by himself.

The Voyage of the "Mayflower II"

An Article Specially Written for The Christmas Number of "The Sphere" by her Captain

ALAN VILLIERS

WHEN I saw the extraordinary little vessel known as the barque *Mayflower II*, of London, lying beautifully floodlit off Plymouth Rock in the pretty port of Plymouth, Massachusetts, I wondered how we had managed to sail her there. She looked so fantastic and altogether incredible, with her enormously high after-castle and her low waist, her steeved-up bowsprit entirely unsupported by any kind of stays, her wooden masts and yards and all her rigging of hempen rope.

But there she was. We *had* sailed her—despite the pessimists who croaked that she would capsize, or that some other awful and final calamity would befall her. I had to sail from Plymouth, Devon, with an untried ship, because it was already late in the spring then, and I needed easterly winds. I sailed on April 20, the very first chance I had, and the ship had been under sail for a bare three hours previously on a brief builders' trial which served mainly as a Press photographers' joyride. They loved it, but I was well aware that this was no real trial for the vessel, for the weather was good and the light perfect. The ship could be tested under such conditions only to the extent of trying out her sails.

It was the transatlantic voyage which was the real trial voyage—and trial it was, in more senses than one. I knew I had excellent mates and a first-class crew, and I enjoyed the challenge of showing what a British crew could still do in a square-rigged sailing-ship, especially in an awkward little medieval type like that which no one had been asked to sail for probably a couple of centuries. I had listened to so much nonsense about our British seamen—that they were not the men their fathers were, that they were a race of rust-chippers and "soogee-moogee" artists, their seafaring souls lost in a round of humdrum tasks aboard their too-mechanical modern ships.

This I knew to be arrant nonsense. I had a crew of twenty-six, about half of whom (including the mates) had previous experience in square-rigged sailing-ships. The rest included young officers from great British steamship lines, two international dinghy helmsmen from the Oxford University Yacht Club, a surgeon from South Africa who was a submarine commander during the war, a Scot who had qualified as a city planner after serving several years at sea and came to me from Ethiopia, a boy who had been elected "boy of the year" by the boys' clubs of America and another specially selected by the boys' clubs of Britain. My shipwright was a man who had helped build the ship. My cook was Walter Godfrey, from the General Steam Navigation Company, who knew how to provide three good meals a day and fresh bread several times a week in a ship without refrigeration, or any other modern appliances.

I did have a wireless operator. The Ministry of Transport had indicated that two-way radio might be a good idea. After all, it was scarcely possible for the little ship to comply with modern safety standards, in the matter of lifeboats and so forth. Indeed, she could not carry a lifeboat or a pair of davits at all, and be historically correct. She had a sort of longboat with an air-cooled diesel engine which was not historically correct either, but there were no davits to launch this and it did not really count. The Ministry asked us to carry inflatable life-rafts and lifejackets sufficient for twice the number aboard, and let us go at that—provided we were equipped for radio. This meant that we had to carry a small generator which was a bit of a pity, I thought, for its noise and vibration, slight as they were, upset the peace of what should have been quiet days. It was a good generator, however, and there were times when we were glad of the radio.

This was particularly so shortly after sailing, on April 20 this year. There was a lot of bad weather about, blowing at gale force from south-west and sometimes north-west. The Atlantic liner lanes had never been so littered with great icebergs, and altogether the westbound crossing promised to be about as bad as it could be. And the easterly winds had blown out. I had planned always to sail on April 2, and punctually on that day good easterlies blew in the Channel and kept on blowing for the following ten days. I had to waste these. The ship was not ready. So when I got away and the gales blew in my face, it was good to be able to let the world know, after a day or two, that I had turned away from them and was heading south. South across the Bay and past all Portugal, picking up the northerly Portuguese "Trades," south past Madeira and down among the Canaries, south towards the region of the north-east trade winds, those assured and faithful winds which had blown Columbus westwards from the Canaries to the West Indies and had been blowing good sailing-ships the same way almost ever since.

The "Mayflower II" lies in Brixham, Devon, harbour, her sails furled, before leaving for Plymouth to start on the epic voyage to Plymouth, Massachusetts

In four days I was across the Bay, the little ship rolling violently and plunging but always running on, the wind howling behind her and across her but never in front of her (thank God), the sea high but her big freeboard keeping her out of it. She rolled and she jumped so much and so constantly that she made even some of the old Cape Horn sailors violently seasick, though they had a good stock of modern remedies along with them and did not object to trying such stuff. She was wet and she was miserable below, for she was altogether too historically correct in some aspects and her topsides let in more water than enough. I lived in the high cabin right at the uppermost end of the high after-castle, and I had never taken such a tossing in a

(*Concluded on page 32*)

The "Mayflower

Painted in Oils for "The Sp

Apart from a few minor details such as the Red Ensign at her mizzen-mast, this could be a painting of the original *Mayflower* as she drove her way through the Atlantic on her voyage into the unknown in 1620. Such was the fidelity with which the designers and builders of *Mayflower II* constructed their replica of the Pilgrim Fathers' ship. But, of course, there are differences. The modern *Mayflower* embodies a common transatlantic endeavour. Conceived by the Mayflower Project, a British organisation, as a gift from Britain to

I" IN MID-ATLANTIC

here" by Montague Dawson

America, she was designed by an eminent American naval architect, Mr. William Baker. He based his blueprints upon the results of most careful research into all that is known about *Mayflower I.* Her hull and keel are of English oak, her masts and spars of Canadian timber and her ropes and spars were made in Scotland. She sailed last summer from Plymouth, Devon, to Plymouth, Massachusetts. She is to lie in a permanent berth at the American Plymouth—a symbol of the abiding friendship between Britain and America.

THE VOYAGE OF THE "MAYFLOWER II"

(*Concluded from page 29*)

ship before. The cabin lacked headroom. It leaked. The deck had a steep slope. The bunk was infernally uncomfortable (not that I had too many chances to use it at that stage of the voyage !).

I had crossed the Atlantic in all sorts of ships, ranging from the *Queen Elizabeth* to wartime LCI(L). I had bounced about on the Newfoundland and the Greenland Banks in a Portuguese dory-fishing schooner for six months at a time. I had tried racing yachts, a Coast Guard barque, my own full-rigged ship. But the *Mayflower II* leapt over them all. She had the wildest motion of the lot. She was the first ship I was ever in in which equipment could fall *upwards* from the deck, where it was thought to be properly secured.

But she steered well and she handled well, and it was immediately obvious that I had managed to get together that so vital thing in any ship, an harmonious, capable and happy crew. They were splendid. Seasick or not, they stood their turns. The rope rigging and the spindly yards of the medieval barque were new to us all, accustomed to the rigid steel spars and iron wire rigging of the modern sailor. Going aloft was a fight, a fight to keep balance despite the ceaseless and unpredictable gyrations of the ship herself and the appalling manner in which she could throw bights in her top-mast shrouds, and in the fore and main shrouds as well. She took a delight in trying to toss boys out of her rigging; but she did not succeed. My fellows took all that in their stride, and learned quickly the ways of a medieval sailorman. Indeed, it was astonishing to see how well she handled and how well they got on aboard, for she had some pieces of gear which I had feared that we must change—like the spritsail, and the big lateen yard with its triangular sail, and the " bonnets " on foresail and mainsail which, by lacing on their additional areas of canvas, were the only means of giving the ship more sail. I had plans to revise all these things and, if necessary, to bend modern substitutes in their place, and to alter the leads of some of the gear for the ocean passage. But I found that I could leave things alone. She was all right. Those old medieval sea-dogs had known what they were doing. Her gear all worked, and it worked very well.

In twelve days I had sailed down to the Canaries, and was driven a little off course there by a head wind: then the wind came from the north again, and we bounded along. It was very pleasant to be in the little ship, rolling and pitching along beneath the trade wind skies, flinging herself along with a great boiling wake at her top speed of about 7½ knots, the sails bellied out and the symmetrical beauty of her wonderful beneath the moon. The flying fish skimmed away before the onrush of her blunt little bows, where the bow-wave she kicked up was larger than enough. For days we sailed along, at a famous clip, and I began to hope that, despite the fact that I was going the southern way (which meant sailing 5,500 instead of perhaps 4,000 miles) I might still make as good a passage as if I had been able to go by the direct route.

" *And then the wind blew again at last, and we came storming along northwards to the west of Bermuda . . .*"

Then the trade wind quietened, and after a while, fell away altogether. Perhaps it was aware that this was one of the last square-riggers—real engineless sailing-ships—which it might have the chance to blow along at all, and it was reluctant to let us pass. The ship lay and wallowed in calm, where the trades should have been at their best. The boys swam over the side. One day I launched the cumbrous longboat and tried to tow her with that, but she would make only a knot and a half. She was too deep in the water, too heavy aft, with her big cargo of " treasure chests." It was futile to try to tow her either under oars or with our small air-cooled diesel. No matter—she had the good quality of being able to " ghost " with the slightest breath of air and she came very easily up to four or five knots. Indeed, it was this quality more than any other that made the voyage possible.

In two weeks, I made less than 900 miles, where I had hoped that she might sail a thousand miles a week. The passage was spoiled, as far as records go. I knew I could not now be less than fifty days and might very well be sixty or even seventy. Well, we had food and water enough. The water was strictly rationed at all times and there was none for washing. Sea water and modern detergents did very well. Some of the shippers of our treasure chests, which had foodstuffs in them, sent me messages that we could eat up all they had aboard, if we had need. This was very kind of them, but we had stored for three months. It is no sense to cut things too fine at sea.

And then the wind blew again at last, and we came storming along northwards to the west of Bermuda, and began to get in the shipping lanes, and astonished steamers of all kinds came to visit us, wondering if they were seeing straight. There was a storm in the Gulf Stream and I hove-to under bare poles, and she showed that she could lie through a great gale in tranquillity. Then came the morning—at last !—when we were off the Nantucket Lightship, fifty-one days out from England, and the beautiful Cunarder *Queen Elizabeth* came across to salute us with her great siren though it was before six in the morning and the passengers must have been awakened by the noise. Blimps, jets, helicopters, ships and yachts of all kinds came out to welcome us. It remained only to bowl along with a fair wind towards Cape Cod, and to tow round the many corners of that sandy headland into the safe haven of Provincetown, where the original *Mayflower* had first landed with her brave pilgrims, and thence to Plymouth.

Our welcome was tremendous, for the *Mayflower* is a very real symbol in New England. Not only in New England but in all North America, there was a very real and a very warm welcome for the little replica and for the small band of us who had been fortunate enough, under God, to sail her.

BYGONE LONDON

"The Turk's Head" at Wapping

A drypoint by W. P. Robins, R.W.S., R.E.

The sixteenth-century tavern The Turk's Head was a feature of the riverfront at Wapping until it was destroyed in the blitz of 1941. In 1936, the local authorities had taken away its licence as they considered it redundant. Its last owner was Captain James Love. The origin of its name has been lost ; some attribute it to the model of a Turk's head which stood over the bar. But it is more likely that it referred to the seaman's knot of the same name.

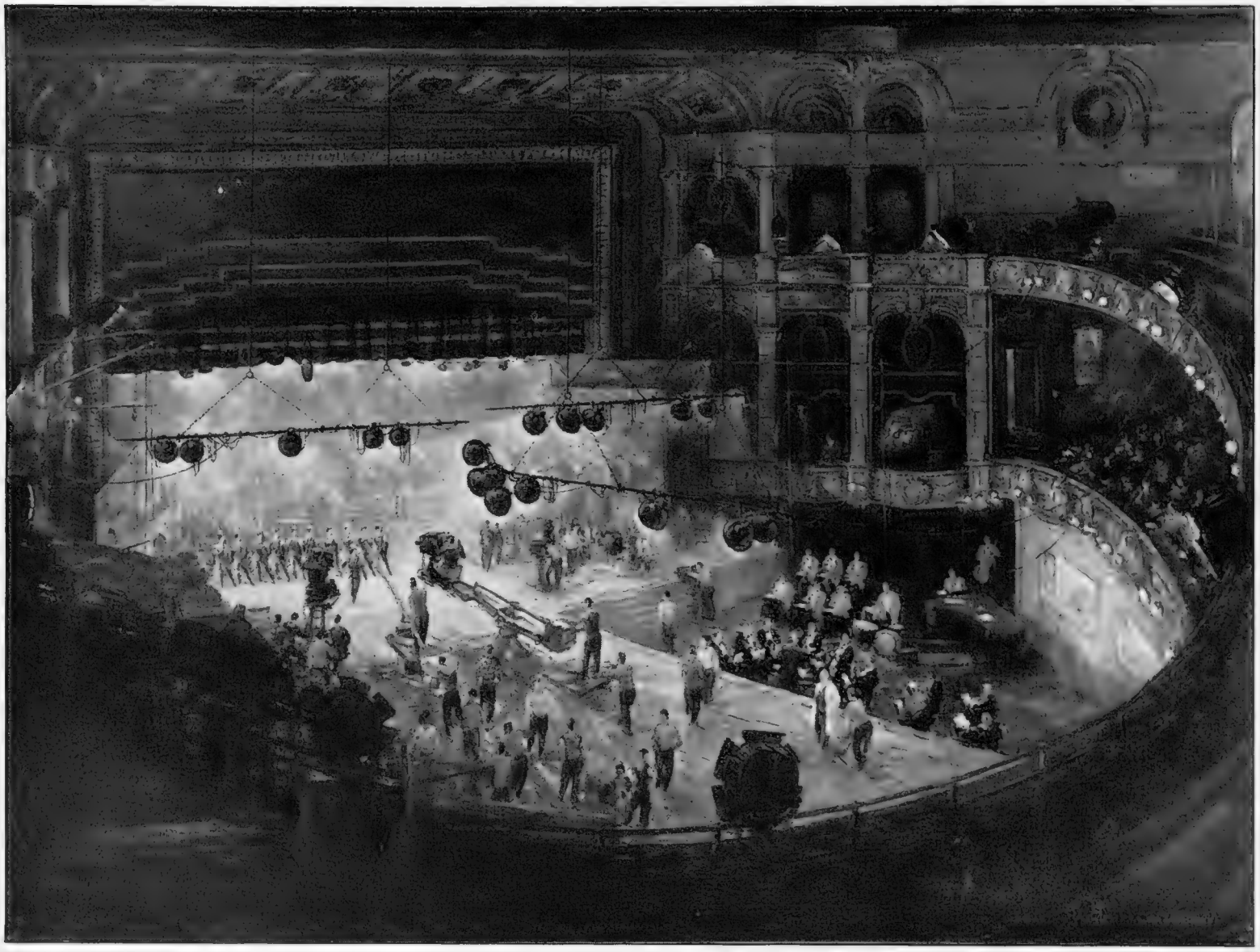
Although the tavern's character had remained unblemished for some 180 years, its past was shady. It was a stopping-place for men leaving Old Newgate on their way to Execution Dock ; and the original licence of The Turk's Head is said to contain a clause obliging the landlord to " supply a quart of ale to every pirate passing on his way to execution." Execution Dock was in the parish of Ratcliff, which lies between Wapping and Limehouse.

Stow says of Wapping that it was " the usual place for hanging pirates and sea-rovers, at the low-water mark, and there to remain till three tides had overflowed them ; was never a house standing within these forty years but since the gallows being after removed farther off, a continual street, or filthy strait passage, with alleys of small tenements or cottages built, inhabited by sailor's victuallers, along by the river of Thames, almost to Radcliffe, a good mile from the Tower." Pirates had been hung at East Wapping as early as the first half of the fifteenth century. The *Chronicle of London*, edited by Sir Harris Nicolas, records that, during the reign of Henry VI, two bargemen were hung beyond St. Katherine's for murdering " three Flemings and a child in a Flemish vessel." As late as 1735, Williams the pirate ended his life at Execution Dock.

The taverns of Wapping were notorious. It was in the Red Cow in Anchor-and-Hope Alley, near King Edward's Stairs, that Judge Jeffreys hid in 1688, while trying to escape in the disguise of a common seaman. As recorded by Macaulay, he was recognised by a local scrivener.

Dr. Johnson, in advising Boswell to explore the extent and variety of London, " in particular recommended us to ' explore ' Wapping, which we resolved to do. We accordingly carried our scheme into execution in October 1792 ; but, whether from that uniformity which has in modern times to a great degree spread through every part of the metropolis, or from our want of exertion, we were disappointed."

A happy contrast to the turgid past of the district is related in *Old and New London*. A fuchsia was discovered by a nurseryman in the window of a small house in Wapping—brought there, no doubt, by a sailor in a West Indiaman. The flower was then unknown in England, but it became so popular that, in the following year, 300 cuttings are said to have been sold at a guinea each.



" A.T.V. at the Wood Green Empire," by Charles Cundall, R.A.—a television programme being produced in a famous old music hall

CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENTS

As Illustrated at this Year's Royal Academy Exhibition

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" Ballerinas," by Dame Laura Knight, R.A.

" At the Back "—a circus scene by Steven Spurrier, R.A.

Let's All Go Down the Strand

By W. Macqueen-Pope

TO go down the Strand has always been and always will be something of an adventure to those who are aware of the past. It is probably the oldest highway in London, originally the strand along the marshy bank of the great river—a track between the settlements which became London and Westminster.

To many people, from the provinces and from overseas, the Strand was the very heart of London. Think of the songs it has inspired—Charles Whittle invited us (and we sing it yet)—" Let's All Go Down the Strand." To Vesta Tilley it was the land of the midnight son—where the rackety young men spent their evenings riotously : " Down the Strand, That's the Land, Of the Midnight Son." And the 1914-1918 war song which sent its regards to Leicester Square, which had become the centre of London's night life (as the Strand had been), had a special regard for it, saying " And give them my love in the Strand." " Burlington Bertie," that master creation of Ella Shields, to prove his aristocratic manner, walked down the Strand with his gloves on his hand, and walked back again with them off. He favoured no other thoroughfare. The Strand was the centre of his world.

The great and enduring charm of the Strand is that it is always changing and yet somehow seems always the same. It has always been a problem, for it is still the bottle-neck of the main east-to-west traffic of London. It is always being widened but it is never wide enough. But it is and always has been a bustling place where life runs strongly. It was a very different place when Dr. Johnson walked along it to visit his friend, David Garrick, either in the Adelphi Terrace or in Southampton Street, or his physician and friend, Dr. Brocklesby, who lived in Norfolk Street. But doubtless he enjoyed those strolls and he would enjoy them now, although he would have found some caustic things to say about the difficulty of crossing the road.

The attempt at a little travelogue of an older Strand must of necessity be but an outline, for every step recalls memory—and space is as limited here as traffic finds it in the Strand. But enough may get through to stir the memories of those who knew the Strand fifty and sixty years ago. It is best to start from the West End and travel east. And at once there looms a memory of the two great hotels which stood there—the Grand Hotel and the Golden Cross—in which David Copperfield had his reunion with Steerforth and whence Mr. Pickwick and his friends set forth on their memorable journey into Kent.

It was at the Golden Cross, during his combat with the hackney coachman, that Pickwick met Alfred Jingle, who knew the Strand well, for he was an actor and for years the Strand was the Street of Actors.

Maybe it is best to make the pilgrimage at Christmas-time because the Strand, then, had a very special allure to the young. Charing Cross Station is much as it was—but in older days one never saw the sight presented by the modern rush-hour when vast crowds pour into it, like an army in retreat or civilians flying from a doomed city. There was a rush-hour, but it did not begin until six o'clock at the earliest and was nothing like it is to-day. What would also strike the beholder to-day was that the crowd was almost entirely male.

In those days very few women had infiltrated into commercial life. The shops in the Strand offered little to attract the ladies. There were no big drapers, no hat shops, but there were gunsmiths, tailors, shirtmakers, opticians, bootmakers—who made boots to measure—restaurants, jewellers, shops appealing to stamp collectors, and pubs and taverns galore. And even the restaurants mainly appealed to men. So the ladies one might meet were either staying at one of the hotels, or on their way to the theatres—unless, of course, they were actresses, music-hall artistes or chorus girls—and there were plenty of those. But they would not be about in the so-called rush-hour.

One thing would strike the modern observer if he could see that crowd of men—the orderly neatness of their attire. They were all fully dressed, there was no display of fancy shirts and ties like a crazy sunset, giving the idea of someone who had run out of a house forgetting to put on all of his clothes. These were English people engaged in business. So they wore dark suits, bowler hats or toppers, straight-up white linen collars—though some of the younger men sported the " double fold "—ties which suited the suits, and hardly any wore shoes. Boots encased their feet.

At Christmas-time, of course, they wore overcoats, some of the loose-fitting raglan type, with slit pockets, others the tighter-fitting Chesterfields, with velvet collars. Very few wore raincoats (then called mackintoshes). Some wore ulsters of heavy dark frieze, reaching almost down to the feet—very warm and sensible for the English winter. Ninety per cent. wore gloves and carried a walking-stick or umbrella. And the same proportion would wear moustaches.

They went into Charing Cross Station and they caught their trains. These were crowded but nobody endured the almost insufferable overcrowding of to-day. And through the gates rolled hansoms and four-wheelers, later mixed with the new-fangled taxi-cabs, chugging along on one cylinder.

But at Christmas-time there was a new feature in the Strand. One would be aware of a very large number of children, escorted by their adult relatives—mostly female, but sometimes Papa came, too. Their faces were eager and intent. Some carried bulky parcels and their expressions were of those who had seen visions.

(Continued on following pages)

LET'S ALL GO DOWN THE STRAND

(*Continued from previous page*)

Those whose hands were empty redoubled their efforts to speed their tardy grown-ups and were scared that they might be too late. The reason was the Lowther Arcade. It has gone now but it stood where one now sees the bank of Messrs. Coutts. The place was unique. It was the heart of the Kingdom of Toyland—no such place exists to-day. There was a very popular song of the period which said :

I was strolling one day down the
Lowther Arcade
The place for the children's toys
Where you can purchase a dolly
or a spade
For good little girls and boys . . .

A dolly or a spade, forsooth ? You could purchase every known variety of toy, simple and complicated, mechanical and static—a bewildering and utterly staggering sight to children, who became lost in wonderment and had the utmost difficulty in making a choice. They could hardly ever be persuaded to leave. There were " scenes " and casting-down of themselves on the floor—and who shall blame them ? Children of to-day have no such paradise.

The writer knew the Arcade well. He remembers vividly being taken to see the great comedian, J. L. Toole, then playing in *Walker, London*, at his own theatre (in King William Street, just off the Strand, and now covered by the Charing Cross Hospital). That kindly man gave him a golden half-sovereign and told him to spend it on toys. So there was an immediate visit to the Arcade. And the writer stood entranced before a complete suit of armour—boy's size—something which seemed quite magical—but which cost more than ten shillings even then. So he never possessed it. But that ten shillings bought a lancer's uniform—or at least the main sections of it—complete with sword and lance, all fixed on a card. The memory of it lingers on—he never saw another. But then, it was in the Lowther Arcade.

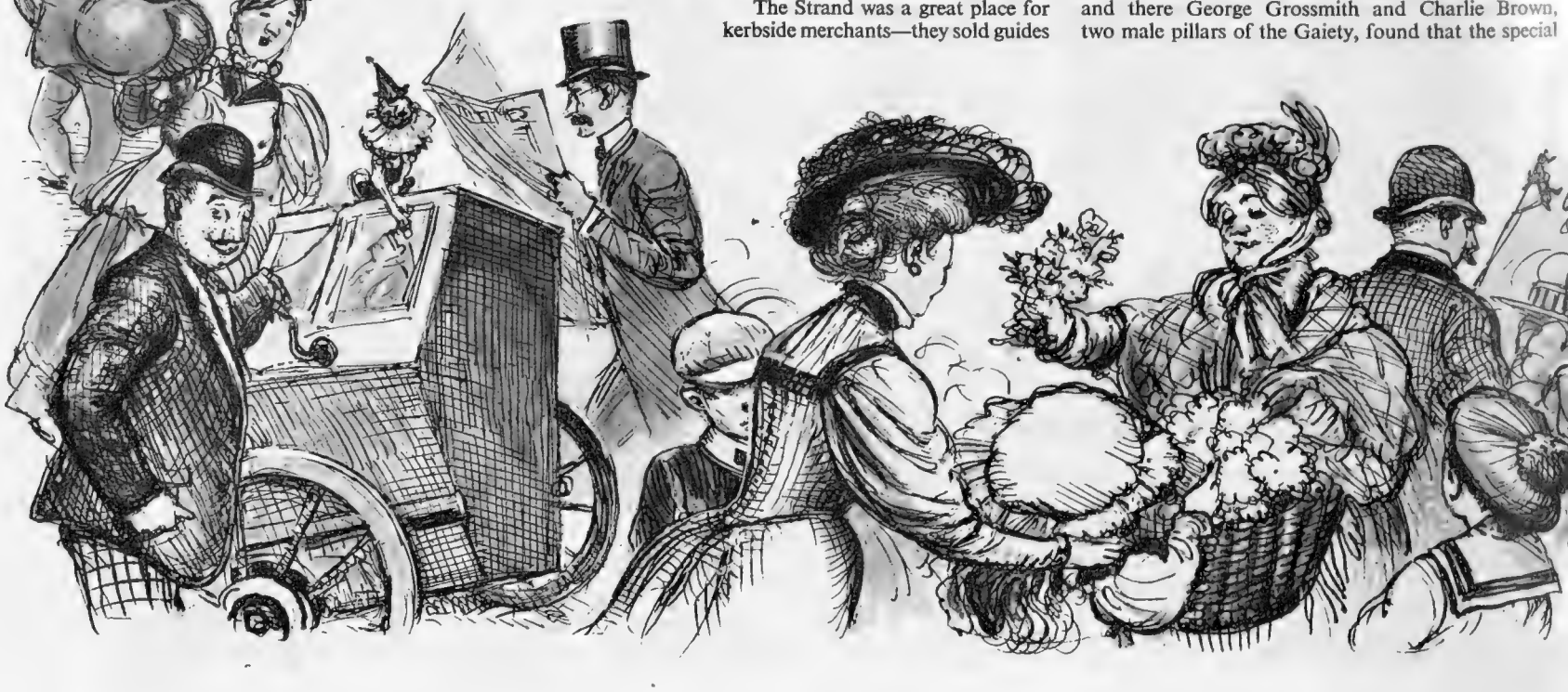
The Strand was a great place for kerbside merchants—they sold guides and maps of London for a penny, all sorts of novelties, and here and there were little pyramids of walnuts, the shells highly polished and one split open to show the sterling quality within.

There was a sensational change in the Strand in 1907, and had you walked along it then you would have glanced with interest, if a male, or averted your eyes, if a lady, from the new building at the corner of Agar Street, then headquarters of the British Medical Association. For the nude statues, by an eminent sculptor, were most revealing anatomically. There was a violent outcry in the Press.

The Adelphi Theatre is still there, although changed out of recognition. Its portico no longer spreads across the pavement and it is no longer the home of melodrama. But it remains one of the finest theatres of the Strand. And one can still glance into the dark entrance of Bull Inn Court, at the end of which William Terriss, a superb actor, was murdered by a maniac. And you will still see the Vaudeville Theatre, although altered in appearance.

You will look in vain for a bronze portico along the edge of which danced little bronze Cupids. Or that covered the entrance to Romano's, one of the Strand's—indeed, London's—most celebrated restaurants. Cabs and carriages would be " setting down," and into the vestibule went prosperous and carefree people. This was Bohemia. Here titles rubbed shoulders with greasepaint, marquis and mummer met, sportsmen sat next to judges and lawyers, artists swapped stories with famous writers. Men and women of the music hall and of the legitimate theatre all had their special tables—managers as well as players.

Strange characters went there, like Abingdon Baird—" The Squire "—a notorious gambler, surrounded by his bodyguard of pugilists. No need for them there, however, for Romano—" The Roma " as he was called—kept personal watch and preserved order. There the Gaiety Girls lunched—at special rates arranged by George Edwardes, the " Guv'nor," and there George Grossmith and Charlie Brown, two male pillars of the Gaiety, found that the special



prices did not include vintage wines and Waterloo brandy—for which Romano's was specially famous. Such a place could not exist to-day. And Exeter Hall—famous for religious meetings and the then headquarters of the Y.M.C.A.—has gone, too ; also Haxell's Hotel. A vast hotel has swallowed up their sites. The old houses running from the corner of Bedford Street would be missed ; they included a shop which specialised in all kinds of photographs.

But the other side has changed, too. Old-timers would look in vain for the Hotel Cecil. Shell-Mex House is there to-day. Gone, too, is the Tivoli Music Hall. It was pulled down in 1914 and a cinema arose, which has also gone now.

One recalls the establishment of Rimmel, " the scenter of the Strand." Rimmel was a master of publicity and supplied scented programmes to many theatres. Across the way was another celebrated eating house—Gow's. This was a contrast to Romano's. It was essentially English ; you sat in high-backed pews in little cubicles and there was sand and sawdust on the floor.

The Strand was a very cheerful street. At Christmas-time it seemed to carry with it the essence of turkeys, geese, plum puddings and all that went to make that season. It has always had a great theatrical air, and just a few yards away was Drury Lane Theatre itself, the real home of Pantomime. And there was an entrance into the Lyceum, where Sir Henry Irving's name blazed in lights, in the Strand, too.

But perhaps greatest of all was the Gaiety—the first and second Gaietys. The first had a little pinched-up entrance. The second is now being demolished. So will pass one of the brightest spots the happy Strand ever knew—one of the brightest spots of the world. That last Gaiety opened in 1903 and was a London institution. The Gaiety stage-door was the gateway to romance. There gathered the *jeunesse dorée*—the Midnight Sons. They never went further east : it was their last outpost—to take a Gaiety Girl out to supper was the height of their ambition, and most of them realised it. At the Waterloo Bridge corner of Wellington Street there stood a crossing-sweeper who kept a path clear of mud and who reaped a copper benefit.

Decorations by J. S. Goodall

And that was really the end of the West End part of the Strand. For Bush House now covers much of the remainder.

Still the Strand goes on, although its personnel is different. Once many actors trod its way—and were in and out of the taverns. One met one's friends there and got news of jobs ; beer was only 1½d. a glass and whisky 3d. And in Bedford Street was—and is—the Bodega, the favourite house of call for the actors of the turn of the century, for at the bar was a massive cheese for anyone to enjoy —and it was free.

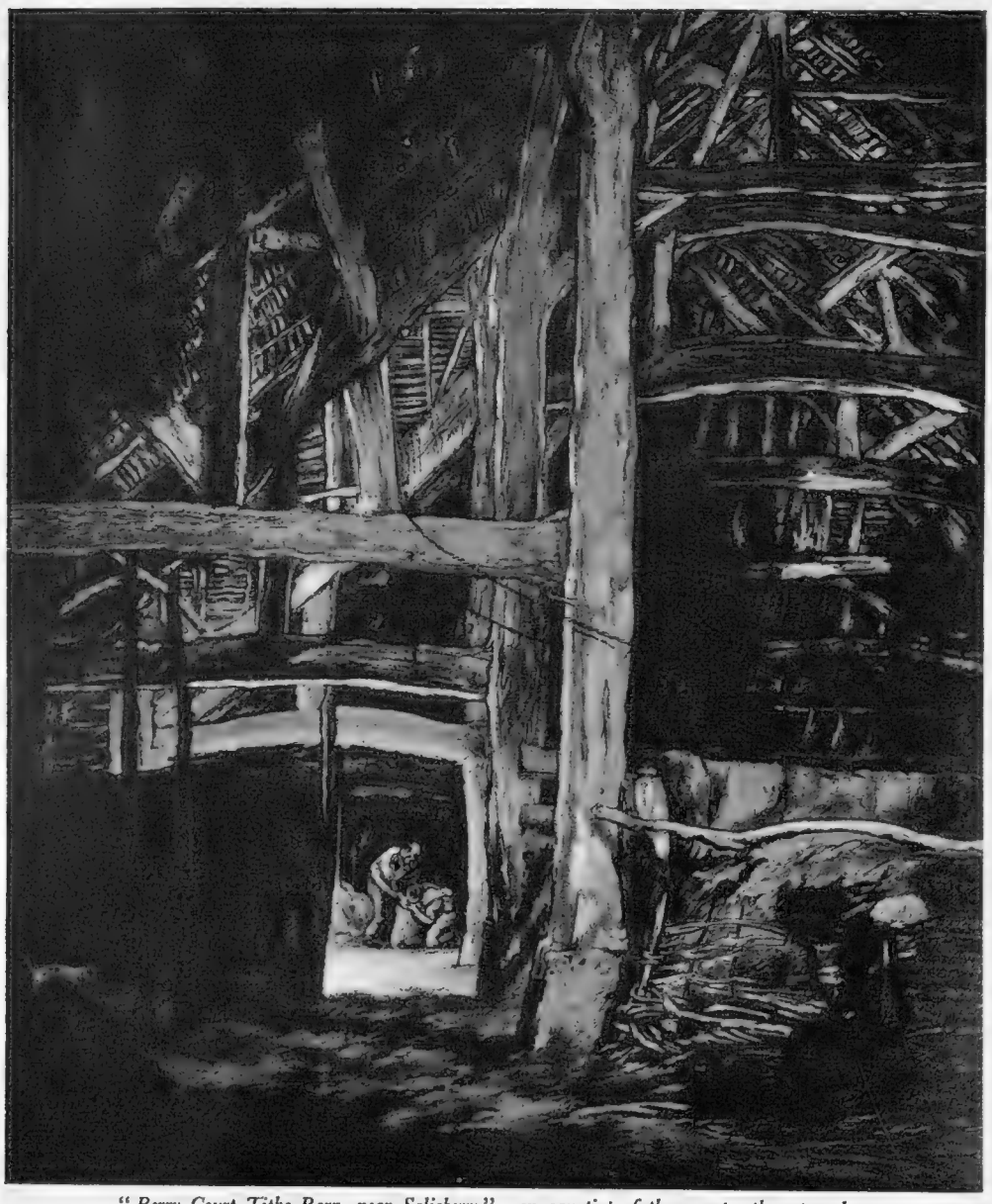
You would see, too, figures of rags and dirt shuffling along with downcast eyes, intent upon trifles on the pavement or in the gutter, and at night-time suddenly they would vanish. They had gone into the Adelphi Arches to sleep. And small boys, coatless and with bare feet, opened the doors of cabs and carriages—they called it " glimming "—and earned a few coppers. That is all gone—but the Strand goes on. One walks there to-day in a different sort of society and in different surroundings, but always conscious that its spirit will never change. But never again will the essence of feminine charm, loveliness and glamour float down the Strand in the evening—for the Gaiety has gone and the Gaiety Girls are no more : perhaps one misses them the most . . . But the Thames is still there and its Strand is still there, changing like the face of London yet keeping that same spirit which one hopes may be eternal . . .

"December Night, near Felsted, Essex"—The aquatint, which was exhibited at the Royal Academy last year, shows farm hands working at night with the aid of a powerful Tilley lamp

The English Countryside in Aquatint

Examples of the Art and Craft of W. P. Robins, R.W.S., R.E.

The aquatint is a particularly happy medium for conveying the quiet peace of the English countryside, and one in which Mr. W. P. Robins excels. Nevile Wallis has written of the artist that "one thinks of him primarily as a pastoral artist, with a profound love and understanding of the English river, woodland and cloudscape. . . ." Readers of THE SPHERE are more familiar with his architectural subjects, but he now has a vast body of work behind him covering a diversity of subjects and media. An admirer of Cotman, his work is in the East Anglian tradition, yet with a distinct personal style and flavour. His art has been recognised in many countries and his book, *Etching Craft*, is invaluable for students. Mr. Robins now spends his time between his studio in Fulham and his cottage at Felsted, in Essex—symbolic, perhaps, of his work, which may be of urban or pastoral subjects.

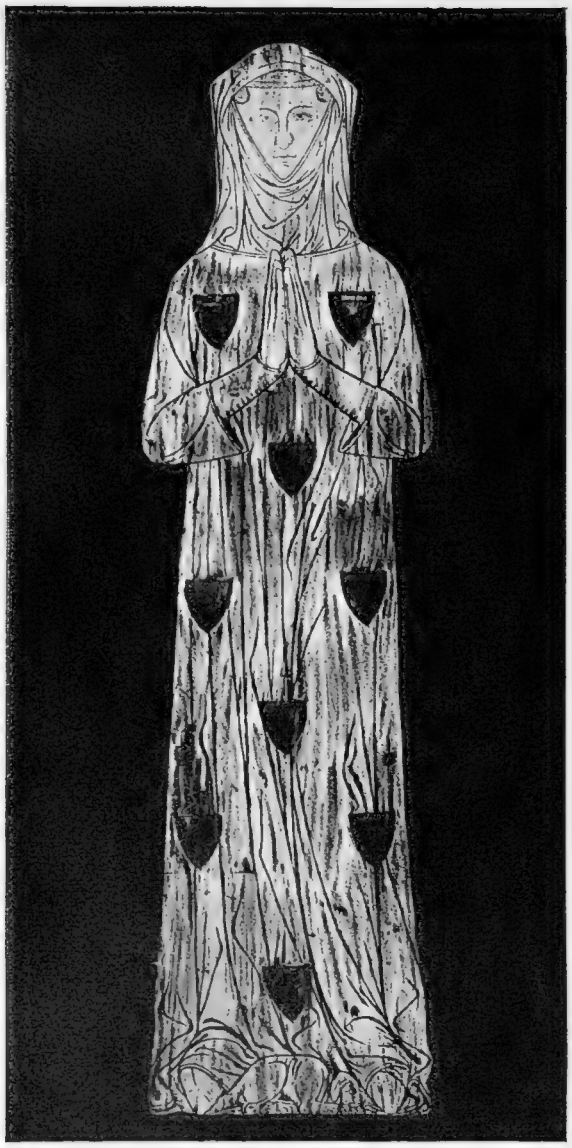


"Berry Court Tithe Barn, near Salisbury"—an aquatint of the seventeenth-century barn, which belonged formerly to the Bishop of Salisbury

"An Old Barn near Rabley Heath, in Hertfordshire"—etching and drypoint

" A Quiet Evening at Sarre, in Kent "—an aquatint which beautifully expresses the gentle English countryside

" Sunny Evening at Dinton, Wiltshire "—another aquatint, typical of the artist's skill and charm



MARGARETE DE CAMOYS, TROTTON, SUSSEX. C. 1310. *Fashion has not been invented. The form of the body is completely hidden by the loose dress. The hair is hidden by the head-veil and the face almost concealed by the whimple.*

DAME MARGARET DE COBHAM. COBHAM, KENT. 1375. *We see the emergence of the "three devices" of Fashion: shaped bodice, décolletage and head-dress framing the face, rather than concealing it, in triple folds of linen.*

JOHN COOP.. STOKE FLEMING, DEVON. 139[illegible] *Typical male dress at the end of the fourteenth century. Th[illegible] long gown, which still carries a suggestion of the medieval hood[illegible] is edged with fur. Note the bifurcated beard and the long hair.*

FASHIONS FROM BRASS RUBBINGS

Some of the Earliest Records of Fashions in Clothes Come from Church Brass Rubbings

By JAMES LAVER

All pictures are reproduced, by permission, from the original brass rubbings in the Victoria and Albert Museum

WE are apt to take for granted the notion that women's clothes change with every season, that novelty is of their essence, and even that there is something almost indecent in being seen in last year's hat. In reality Fashion is quite a modern invention, modern that is, in the long perspective of the history of costume. We have to go a long way back in time, or a long distance in space, to find tribes too primitive to have some form of dressing up, even if they only do it on special occasions, such as a spring festival of fertility. Men and women have been wearing *clothes* for many millennia, but Fashion, in our sense, did not usually enter into the matter at all.

Among the Ancient Greeks, the only women who wore fine clothes and adopted new modes were the hetairœ who, in spite of their social prestige, were outside the pale of respectability. For respectable women the rule was to look as inconspicuous as possible and to veil before the world those charms which were reserved for the husband only. The Christian ethic reinforced this tendency, with the result that during the next thirteen centuries there is hardly any change in women's clothes at all.

Then, in a single generation, everything changed. In the luxurious courts of France and Burgundy in the fourteenth century there was a sudden realisation that clothes, instead of mere wrappings, could be potent weapons to attract the attention, and influence the choice, of the other sex. And in little more than a decade were invented the three devices on which Fashion has played infinite variations ever since. The three devices were décolletage, tight-lacing, and striking head-dresses, one is almost tempted to call them funny hats.

Instead of the main garment being loose and enveloping it was cut to reveal the shape of the figure and, in particular, the smallness of the waist. Corsets had not yet been invented but the dress was stiffened to give very much the same effect. Instead of the top of the dress concealing the throat, it was cut away to reveal much of the bosom. And instead of the veil being used to cover the hair and a considerable portion of the face, it was drawn away from the countenance with pins and wires, and even attached like a flag to towering constructions in the shape of a church steeple or the devil's horns. Moralists at once began to denounce the new developments and they have been at it—without any effect whatever—ever since.

Of course, Fashion, courtly invention as it was, had for a long time little effect on the dress of the common people. But the well-born and prosperous soon began to copy the court ladies, in spite of all the sumptuary laws which tried to control it. By the beginning of the fifteenth century, if not earlier, it is safe to say that every "lady" knew what Fashion was and followed it as best she could. Such an event, such an acceptance of change, is the beginning of modernity. It is the emergence of the mobile modern world from the static world of the early Middle Ages. It is the victory of Time over Place, for no longer did people dress according to their nationality or even according to their position in society, but according to the *year*. To-day the process is almost complete, so that we can no longer say that is a Spanish, or a French, or an English dress, but only that it is a dress of 1956 or 1957. The "Time-disease" has now infected the whole world; its first symptoms can be detected about the year 1350.

There is therefore a particular interest in studying the dresses of the early centuries of Fashion and watching how they were gradually developed. How do we know about such things? What evidence have we that Fashion really began about the middle of the fourteenth century?

There were no fashion plates at that period, no engravings even. There were a few pictures, but these were almost all devoted to religious subjects. There are a few sculptures which seem to show contemporary dress, but they cannot be relied upon as an exact record. Anything like a continuous, yearly sequence of fashion is extremely hard to come by, or rather, it would be but for a source of information which, as yet, has been almost unexploited.

This source consists of what are called brass rubbings and, perhaps, to the modern generation the word needs a little explanation. Forty years ago, every boy with a taste for archæology knew about "sepulchral brasses" and it was a popular hobby to "rub" them. The quarry was tracked down by bicycle and located, usually, in some country church. The hunters could be recognised by the long rolls of thin paper tied across their handlebars, and perhaps by the blackness of their hands, for the rubbing was made by means of black "heel-ball" or cobbler's wax.

On arrival at the church, and with or without the consent of the vicar, the paper was stretched over the brass by means of wafers of adhesive paper and a rubbing was taken and carried home in triumph. It was one of the disappointments of the present writer that, as he lived as a boy in Liverpool, he was unable to take brass rubbings. Brasses are almost unknown in Lancashire, for that now prosperous and populous country was in the Middle Ages a wild and barren place. Brasses are most numerous in the southern and eastern counties, where there was a flourishing trade in wool.

In southern England and in the Low Countries (and, curiously enough, nowhere else) the usual monument in churches from about 1250 to 1620 was a brass, that is to say a fairly thin sheet of metal incised with a design, usually a human figure, and cut round to form a kind of silhouette. This was let into a slab of stone cut to receive it, and was then used as a gravestone, in the floor, or on the wall, of a church. There is no question of bas-relief; stone and metal plate form a perfectly flat surface, and from this surface, with its clean incisions, a rubbing can be taken with great ease.

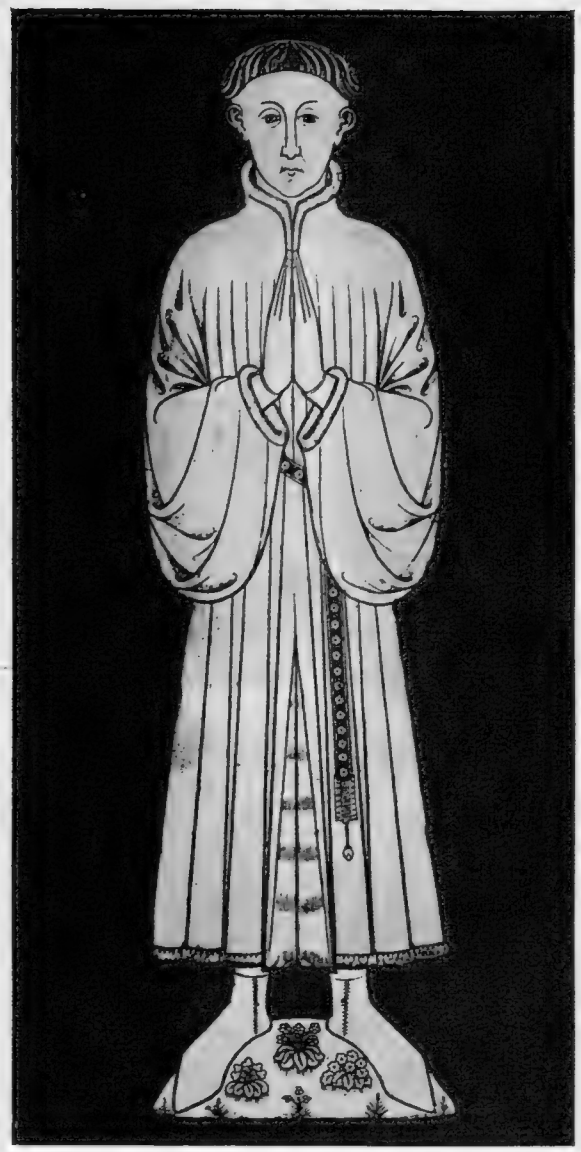
Brasses have the enormous advantage of being almost all dated, and although one must allow for a time-lag, especially in the remoter parts of the country, it is at least possible to say that any given fashion must have been in existence on the date given, even if it first appeared a few years earlier.

A collection of several thousand of such rubbings made either by boys, or by those whose archæological interest in brasses continued throughout life (some country parsons were enthusiastic rubbers till the end of their days), is preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and is well known to students, especially to students of armour, for it goes without saying that many, if not most, of the male figures are shown in all the panoply of war. But, for study purposes, brass rubbings have certain disadvantages. Many of them are exceedingly large, and the predominance of black makes

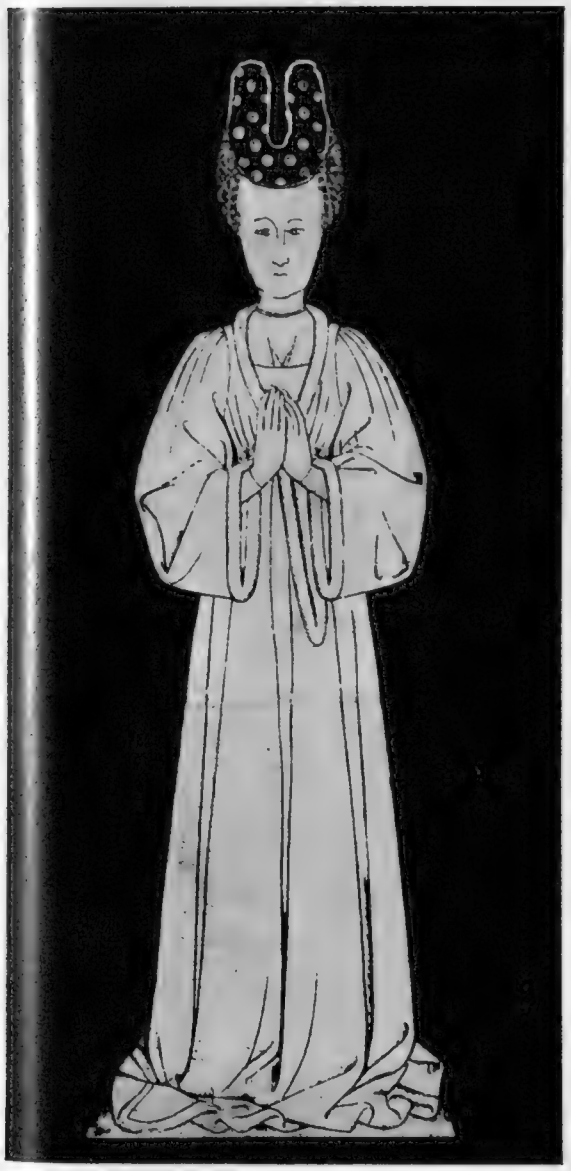
(*Concluded on page 42*)

A. CHEYNE. HEVER, KENT. 1419. *This is an elegant brass. The décolletage of the costume is modest enough but the waist might almost be called tight-laced. The veil is drawn away from the face and a considerable amount of the hair is visible.*

AGNES SALMON. ARUNDEL, SUSSEX. 1430. *A development of the fashion shown in the previous plate. The method of wearing the veil is very similar but the hair is enclosed in a jewelled net. The waist is almost "Empire."*



ROBERT SKERN. KINGSTON-ON-THAMES. C. 1437. *The gown is shorter than that worn by John Coop in* 1391 *and has a fur-lined collar. The hair is short and the face is clean-shaven to allow the wearing of the new helmet with its chin-piece.*



JANE KERIELL. ASH-NEXT-SANDWICH, KENT. C. 1460. *The head-dress has now assumed a new form—indeed, it might almost be taken for a modern hat. Such fancy shapes as this were strongly denounced by the moralists of the period.*

ELIZABETH HASYLDEN (PROBABLY). LITTLE CHESTERFORD, ESSEX. C. 1480. *An extreme form of the late fifteenth-century fashion. The waist is nipped in and the décolletage almost daring. The veil is now drawn right away from the face to form the butterfly head-dress of transparent linen. Through it can be seen the chignon of jewelled net.*

WILLIAM EYRE. GREAT CRESSINGHAM, NORFOLK. 1502. *The typical male costume of the early sixteenth century, with its long furred gown (recognisable as the ancestor of all mayoral robes), and square-toed shoes. The hair is worn long.*

AGNES OR JACOMYNE SMYTH. ETON COLLEGE, BUCKS. 1528. *The whole outfit is rather subdued after the extravagance of the late fifteenth century. The butterfly head-dress has disappeared and the face is framed rather severely.*

PHILIPPE DARCY. TOLLESHUNT DARCY, ESSEX. 1559. *Female costume at the very beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign. The head-dress is of the style affected by Mary, Queen of Scots. The ruff, it will be noticed, is still quite small.*

RICHARD PAYTON. ISLEHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE. 1574. *Male costume of the first half of Elizabeth's reign. The ruff is still small and the doublet has skirts. Below them can be seen the trunk hose which are of modest dimensions.*

FASHIONS FROM BRASS RUBBINGS

(*Continued from page 40*)

a very gloomy effect. Then, too, it is very difficult for the eye to understand a *negative*, which the brass rubbing inevitably is. However, if selected brass rubbings are photographed to make them more or less uniform in size, and then re-photographed from the negative, a new world is opened. It is like coming across a whole collection of line-drawings, all clear and comprehensible, and some of them of great beauty.

In a recent exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum it was found possible to provide an almost continuous series of feminine fashions (for the men, on this occasion, were purposely omitted) from 1377 to 1648. The effect was singularly striking and the whole exhibition excited the greatest interest not only among art students and the general public, but among the professional dress designers themselves. What struck the latter most forcibly was the *modernity* of some of the dresses and, strangely enough, it was the earlier examples which looked more modern than those of later date. There is nothing in modern fashion which suggests the farthingales or the gigantic ruffs of the Age of Elizabeth; nothing corresponding to those hieratic forms, stiff with embroidery and loaded with jewels. But some of the fashions of the late fifteenth century might, with very slight modifications, have been designed to-day.

There is the same feeling for slim elegance, the same physical type even, the fall of the skirt is that of a modern evening gown; even some of the head-dresses bear the oddest resemblance to modern hats. The little jewellery worn is worn in the modern manner; even some of the faces are more in accordance with modern taste than most of the faces of intervening periods.

The first of our illustrations shows a high-born lady of the early years of the fourteenth century. She is wrapped up like a parcel, and the parcel at that date had not yet begun to be unpacked. The face is perhaps even more closely covered than it would have been a hundred years before, for it is thought that the first impact of the Crusades was to cause the European warriors to adopt some of the manners of their Saracen opponents. The veiled woman was of course, a Mohammedan custom. Certainly at this period there was little to choose between the woman of Western Europe and her sister in the Levant. Except, perhaps, the armorial bearings. It will be noticed that the lady's dress is sprinkled with shields, bearing her husband's blazon. This heraldic or hierarchic element in women's dress persisted for a long time, but it was fighting a losing battle with the Seduction Principle which has ruled, in an increasing measure, ever since the invention of Fashion.

If we look at the new few female costumes we can trace this emergence; it is like the gradual opening of a flower, for women's clothes—once the Fashion element has been admitted—are alive like flowers. Men's clothes, on the other hand, are always tending to stereotype and even to fossilise themselves, and some of these fossilisations have persisted until this day. It is not difficult, for instance, to see the modern mayor's robe taking shape in the male costumes of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century.

Women's clothes, when we reach the sixteenth century, seem to enter a period of autumn—a stiffening of the forms at its most obvious in the " Tudor arch " head-dress. This is one of the oddest resemblances between women's dress and its contemporary architecture and interior decoration. All the wives of Henry VIII look as if they were peering out of the windows at Hampton Court.

The head-dress slips back and grows more becoming as the sixteenth century proceeds, but the gown and the stomacher become ever more rigid, until by the end of Elizabeth's reign the farthingale makes every fine lady look as if she were standing inside a barrel. If a beautiful dress is one which enables the shape of the body, if not to be seen, at least to be divined, late Elizabethan fashions were surely among the ugliest that have ever been invented.

The universal ruff, which grew ever larger as the century drew to a close, made every man and every woman look like John the Baptist with his head on a charger. But as far as women were concerned the Seduction Principle was not to be denied, and our last illustration shows a lady wearing a kind of ruff familiar to us from many of the portraits of the great Queen herself. A true ruff obviously makes décolletage impossible, so the circle of folded linen has been broken that the fair bosom may be displayed.

And here we may leave brass rubbings as a record of Fashion. They have served their purpose and the tale is taken up by the painters and engravers. There is no lack of material for the study of dress in the seventeenth century.

RADCLIFF WINGFIELD. EASTON, SUFFOLK. 1601. *Typical female costume at the very end of Elizabeth's reign. The ruff has now become enormous but is divided to show the décolletage. The farthingale is now universally worn.*

From the collection of Mr. Evelyn Waugh

Fleet Street,

7 p.m.

From the Painting
by Atkinson Grimshaw
Dated 1886

Atkinson Grimshaw found beauty in streets at night, with bright lights shining and reflecting on wet pavements and roads. Born in Leeds in 1836, his first working days were with the Midland Railway. He began his career as a painter before he was twenty. During his life, his pictures became very popular in Australia; recently he has aroused interest in America and, earlier this year, he made a "come-back" in this country when an exhibition was given at the Arthur Jeffress Gallery in Davies Street, Mayfair. He has been referred to as "a self-taught Pre-Raphaelite" and certainly he came under the influence of the Brotherhood as instanced in his "The Lady of Shalott" (now in America) and in "Dulce Domum," of which the *Art Journal*, reviewing the Royal Academy of 1885, wrote that it was a "bold and not unsatisfactory attempt to revive the tradition of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood."

The picture above presents a scene not very different from to-day. The Law Courts clock and the Church of St. Dunstan-in-the-West still dominate the view. On the left, No. 50, Fleet Street was demolished early in this century and the building for The Norwich Union Insurance Societies was erected about 1908. On the right is Sell's Advertising Office. This company, established by Mr. Henry Sell in 1869, in offices in Bolt Court, had moved to 167, Fleet Street three years before Grimshaw painted his picture. In 1883 Mr. Henry Sell published *Sell's Philosophy of Advertising and Newspaper Register for 1883*, with, on the fly-leaf: "NOTICE: REMOVAL TO FLEET STREET. For the greater convenience of my customers, and to meet the requirements of an increasing business, I have taken large premises on the *Ground Floor* at 167, Fleet Street (sixteen doors west of Bolt Court)." In 1901 the old building was demolished and rebuilt, the company occupying the entire new building of 167-169, Fleet Street, where they remained until 1934, when they moved to Brettenham House, at the Strand end of Waterloo Bridge.

A cheerful luge party attaches itself to a sleigh near Gstaad, in the Bernese Oberland

The little village of Galtür, in the Austrian Tyrol, nestles round its church

Early spring in the Austrian Tyrol—the ski class has its last lesson, while the farmer releases his hens from their winter indoors

Winter Scenes

In England, Austria and Switzerland

From the paintings by
DEIRDRE HENTY-CREER

A Swiss scene in England—ski-ing and tobogganing in the Vale of Health at Hampstead, in the north of London

IN the three pictures on the left Miss Deirdre Henty-Creer has painted incidents which will be familiar to the many who enjoy winter sports holidays on the Continent. At the top we are in Gstaad, in the Bernese Oberland of Switzerland. A party of enthusiasts—some of them children—have attached their luges or toboggans to a horsedrawn sledge, thus solving the problem of a lift up to the heights for a run down. Gstaad has a number of excellent toboggan runs. Also, as can be seen, the snow-covered slopes provide splendid sport for skiers. Next we move to Austria, to the village of Galtür, in the Tyrol. Some 4,500 ft. up, it is the highest village in the Paznaun Valley and though to reach it the journey by postbus is somewhat hazardous, it is well worth while. As one moves over the snow on skis, one seems to increase one's feeling of good health and well-being with every breath of the crisp, cold air. In the bottom picture we come to a sad occasion in the Tyrolean Alps. The last ski-ing class of the season is being held, for spring is on the way. The farmer has released his chickens from their winter quarters and the snow will soon begin to disappear. Winter sports have been developed on a large scale only within the last eighty years or so. But from times immemorial the snow, when it falls in temperate climates, has proved an irresistible attraction. Given the weather, one can enjoy oneself with sledge, toboggan or skis in London, in the Vale of Health at Hampstead. The artist has painted a modern scene but in the past a number of the famous may well have disported themselves here in the snow. Lamb, Keats, Byron, Dickens, Romney and Constable are among the great names who, at various times, occupied some of the surrounding houses. And—dare one suggest it ?—Karl Marx might have descended from his home in the neighbourhood and thrown a snowball at his friend Engels.

Miss Henty-Creer has an international reputation for painting winter scenes and is extremely well qualified to do so. She has camped in the Arctic Circle to paint the Lapps in Northern Finmark.

Some of the 1,500,000 puffins which nest on St. Kilda

Two young fulmar petrels in a nest built for one

The 20th Century Comes to St. Kilda

Article and Colour Photographs by Tom Weir

THE R.A.F. would certainly agree about the impossibility of describing their first few months of hard labour there—working thirteen hours a day with pick and shovel ; navvying in the wind, sleeping in raw cold of April under canvas ; sometimes drawing three sets of dry clothing in a day to replace sodden garments. Tents have been blown down in a 100-mile-an-hour gale; waterspouts cascaded through the tents from the steep slopes above; landing-craft have been nearly wrecked on the Atlantic swell; yet within an hour or two the sky has been clear, the sea deceptively calm, and the green hills of Village Bay serene in the sunshine.

" No wonder the natives left ! " say the Servicemen, looking at the ruins of 1,000 years of continuous occupation which is their back-door museum. Primitive man has left his mark everywhere on St. Kilda, not only in houses, but in hundreds of stone " cleitts," like beehive dwellings, which dot the steep mountainsides and cling precariously to the steepest cliffs. These " cleitts " were storage houses for turf and birds which provided fuel and food for the St. Kildans. Now it is the time for modern man to leave his mark on this island called Hirta by placing alongside these " cleitts " on the hilltops other storage houses, to contain the most expensive radar equipment for tracking rockets when they fly out from South Uist next year.

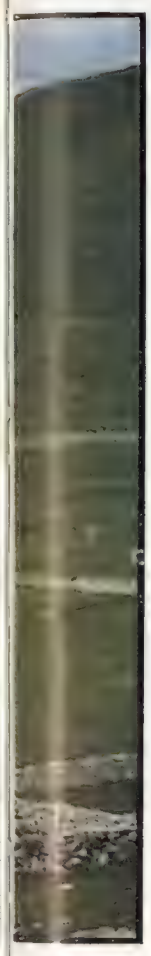
The Manse and the Church—the main buildings used by troops on St. Kilda. These buildings were abandoned in 1930 but are in

The Island of Dun faces Village Bay. Formerly, there was a fort on this island

The view from the village sheep-folds, looking out to the Island

Village Bay of St. Kilda, where the former settlement was established. Now the village fields are a helicopter landing strip, while troops, with highly technical gear, establish a radar station for rocket tracking

Gleann Bay is on the opposite side of the island to Village Bay. Beyond is Boreray and its attendant rock stacks which are famous for their gannet colonies



good condition

The naturalist might be appalled by the huge camp spreading over the village fields, and by the noise of stone-crushers, bulldozers, concrete mixers, lorries, dumpers, the blast of explosions ; but it has made remarkably little difference to the birds or the Soay sheep which have accepted the change and now wander freely about the tents. Nature still wins on St. Kilda, and the efforts of 350 men are seen in proper perspective when viewed from the top of Connachair, which rises in a green wall above Village Bay to plunge 1,300 ft. into the ocean in the greatest sea cliff in Britain.

The birds are still supreme on St. Kilda; fulmars like white clustering flowers on every ledge of the mighty gabbro walls; kittiwakes and guillemots occupying tenements on the dizzy overhangs; puffins buzzing about like bees out of a hive as they whirr back and forth, disappearing underground with tiny little fish held head-to-tail in their quaint bills. Always birds, soaring over the hilltops or sweeping along the cliff-faces. Up here on Connachair, with nothing else but the ocean and the weird rock stacks projecting like monsters out of the sea, one is conscious of the enormous loneliness of St. Kilda, 110 miles west of the mainland of Scotland, with nothing west but Iceland and Greenland, nothing north but the Pole itself.

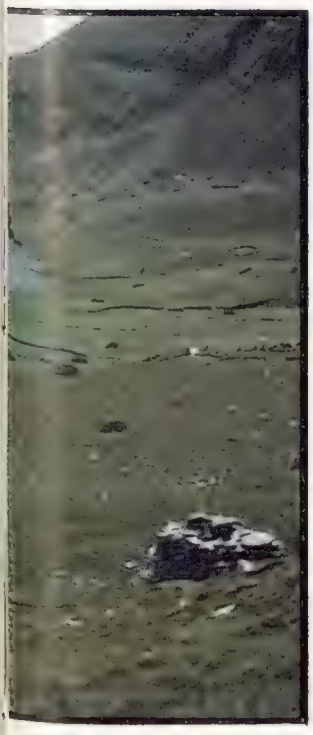
Stretching beyond the rocky tip of Hirta to the north-west is Soay itself, 1,114 ft. high and completely rock-bound, original home of the famous sheep which has been described as a living fossil, with an appearance somewhere between a goat and a deer. Isolated in the Atlantic, this sheep remains pure and uncontaminated by inter-breeding. On Hirta the Soay sheep have risen from a small flock left by the islanders in 1930 to over 1,000 head in 1957. With the coming of the R.A.F., they wander about the encampment cropping the grass between the tents.

Ornithologists have estimated the numbers of puffins on St. Kilda at over 2,000,000, but no one knows the true status of Leach's fork-tailed petrel which is the island's rarest bird, and a species which comes to land only at night with the Manx shearwater and storm petrel, when the stones of the boulder-fields become loud with witch-like screams, and strange cat-like purrings fill the darkness. A watcher on these stones at night is hardly conscious of the passage of time, listening to these weird sounds, and watching for the bat-like shapes of those most oceanic of all birds which arrive to relieve their mates in burrows far beneath the boulders. The shearwater screams his arrival and the well-placed watcher may be lucky to hear it thud to earth and get his torch-beam on it before the pale bird can scramble underground out of reach. Safe below the stones, it will gurgle contentedly and occasionally scream with pleasure, imparting an eerie quality to the loom of the cliffs which are overpowering enough in themselves. The storm petrels and Leach's fork-tailed petrels are the real prizes, however, and if the night be clear enough you may see their aerial dance as they "zoom" overhead, Leach's chuckling with a strange laugh, the little storm petrel showing shorter wings and a pale gleam on a square tail as he plunges below ground to croon and purr like a contented cat.

On St. Kilda early in May this year I shared a unique experience with Dr. J. Eggeling, Conservation Officer for Scotland. We went to investigate the petrel colonies, not knowing whether the birds were back from the sea, since no one had investigated their breeding habits so early on St. Kilda. We decided to spend the night in a "cleitt" on the great boulder face known as Carn Mor, which is a known haunt. From our eyrie we looked down the plunge of cliffs to a sea like crinkled satin in the veiled moonlight. With vast headlands on each side of us and the sheer wall of Mullach Bi rising behind to a dark fang, we should not have been bitterly disappointed if our vigil had been in vain. But it was not. The shearwaters were certainly in, "whooshing" past us with wild screams, but we could neither hear nor see storm or Leach's petrels. Then, when we had resolved we were much too early in the season for them, we heard a staccato little chuckle, and soon there against the sky we saw dancing shapes of long-winged little birds. By 2.30 a.m. we had established that all three petrels were here. It was time to crawl into our sleeping-bags within the narrow stone box with just room enough for two. My companion was in, and I was just getting in, when something passed my eye and I heard the brush of wings against stone. Instantly I flashed my torch and down its beam fluttered a grey shape with jet-black eyes and legs, trying to find a burrow between our sleeping-bags. It was a Leach's petrel, and it lay in the hand quietly, allowing us to examine its tubular nostrils and forked tail. Released, it flew outside and did not return, but we have little doubt that it was exploring a burrow within our shelter.

St. Kilda in May was exciting for migrant birds on their way to the Arctic, but it was much less colourful than in July, when the flowers turn the hilltops yellow and the grass is an emerald green unknown elsewhere in the Hebrides, a lushness all the more startling against the black gabbro which hems the island in nine miles of cliff.

The purist may feel some regret that this natural sanctuary of wild life is now a rocket tracking station with a garrison of troops. But it is this very agency which has put St. Kilda on the map again, for the condition of lease to the R.A.F. by its owners, the National Trust for Scotland, is that parties of visitors be transported by supply ship to land and explore this beautiful place, thus making it a heritage to be enjoyed and not something with the status and remoteness of a desert island.



of Dun

The greatest sea cliff in Britain—the 1,300-ft. face of Connachair

The peak of Liathach is an example of one of the most ancient mountains in the world in an advanced state of denudation. Capped with white quartz, it presents a narrow summit ridge above precipices of Torridonian sandstone plunging sheer into Glen Torridon. The formation produces some of the finest scenery in the north-west Highlands, but it also produces the poorest crofting land

Beinn Eighe, the "peak of the file," in the Nature Reserve of Glen Torridon, is a mountain range rather than a single summit. It is composed almost entirely of quartzite screes and is one of the most barren, but also one of the most beautiful mountains in Scotland. It lies near Loch Clair and Loch Maree which, with their pines and birches, give wonderful effect to the glittering screes

Scotland's Snow Clad Peaks

From Colour Photographs by Tom Weir

On left—

Evening light reflects pine trees of Rothiemurchus Forest, beneath the Lairig Ghru, in the Cairngorms. These trees of the old Wood of Caledon are the most impressive remnant of the great forest which once covered most of the Highlands. With their soft bottle-green canopy and red-tinted boughs, they have an umbrella-shape which makes them different from other pines, and botanists regard them as having separate rank. Behind them rises the mountain known as the Lurcher's Crag, which hems the Lairig Ghru

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Francis Quarles, 1592.

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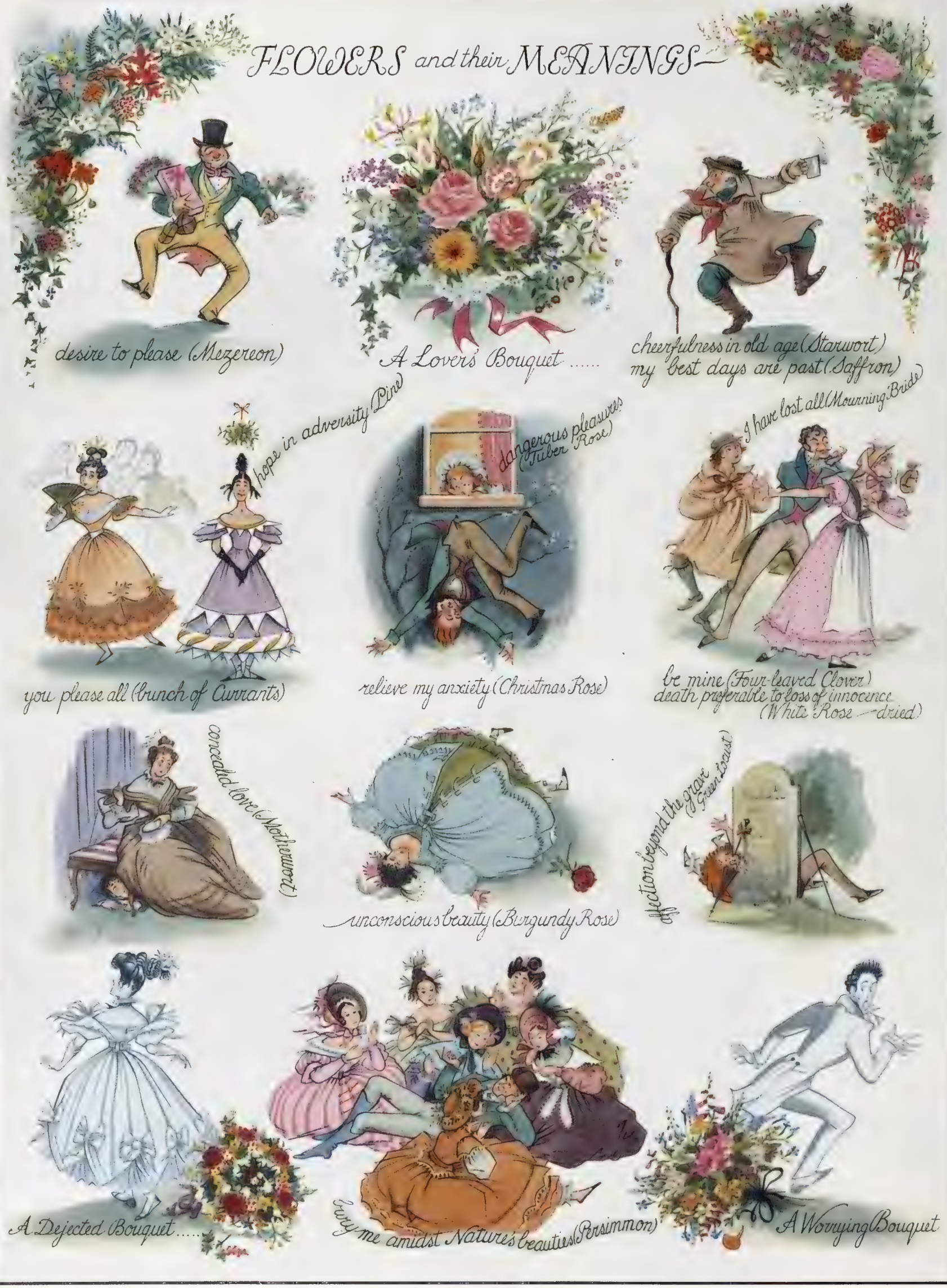
FLOWERS and their MEANINGS—



For centuries individual flowers have had certain characteristics or qualities attached to them. The artist has grouped them into bouquets of "families." Top left are "Virtue" flowers, in the centre "Lovers' bouquet" and on the right border the "fault" flowers. Coming down to the bottom left we find a "Dejected bouquet," and, opposite, in the bottom right, the "Worrying bouquet."

The reasons for the meanings attached to some of the flowers can clearly be discerned in their appearance or names. Thus, the Madonna Lily must stand for purity, Violet is modesty, Forget-me-not means true love, Fools Parsley silliness, and Hemlock "you will be the death of me." There is little difficulty in seeing that Nettles represent slander and spite. But why should a Tulip symbolise declaration of love; Cuckoo-pint ardour; Lavender distrust? The answers are probably lost in the distant obscurity of folklore. Indeed, it is not improbable that the meanings of the various flowers can differ from locality to locality.

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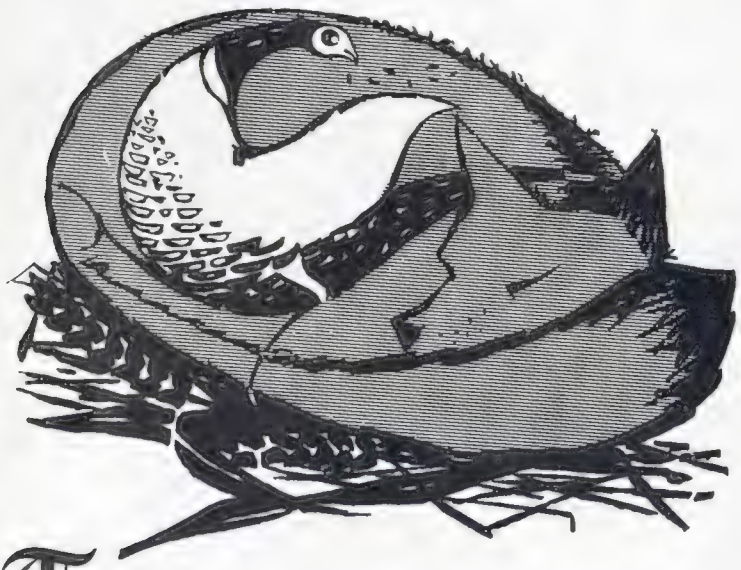

The fox and the pheasant

The Pheasant asked the Fox to sup with him, and put on a fine spread of mixed corn. The Fox watched the Pheasant make a hearty meal and then, unable to bear his hunger any longer, sprang upon his host and devoured him. Moral: IT IS SAFER TO CATER PROPERLY FOR PEOPLE'S LIKES AND DISLIKES.

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GRANT'S MORELLA CHERRY BRANDY

SEDANS IN ST. JAMES'S SQUARE

A Fashionable Form of Transport in Bygone London

(*Photograph by courtesy of the British Museum.*)

St. James's Square in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

TO-DAY, smart and shining cars are parked in the famous London square. But in the seventeenth century the young bloods came into it in their sedan chairs, past stalls selling barley broth and cowheel soup. In 1623, James I sent his favourite, Buckingham, and Prince Charles to Madrid to arrange a Spanish marriage. The plan was a failure; the Spaniards detested Buckingham's arrogance, and the visitors returned home without a bride, but with three sedan chairs.

By 1634, Buckingham's friend, Sir Saunders Duncombe, held the patent for the chairs, allowing him "To put forth and let out for hire for fourteen years." This brought him a small fortune. Buckingham, who had helped him obtain the patent, also had a finger in the commercial pie!

The chairs, which are believed to have been invented in the French town from which their name was taken, became immensely popular in England and were much used. They proved far less cumbersome in narrow streets than heavy coaches. In London every large mansion owned at least one family chair. Some private ones were very ornamented, though hardly as sumptuous as Louis XV's chair, which was lined with crimson velvet, the panels painted by a French artist, probably Vernet; the whole equipage escorted by a cavalcade of gentlemen, troops and liveried lackeys.

The English chairs were more sober, usually about 5 ft. high and 3 ft. wide. One, in the London Museum, has the three panels decorated with cherubs. The top is covered in leather, and lined inside with damask material. The window can be lowered by a strap, and the roof opens upward to allow the "fare" to stand. The seat is only 15 ins. from the floor; so, either our ancestors were shorter in the leg, or they must have been very cramped. For two centuries a chair-rank stood in St. James's Square, and the last sedan did not disappear until after Queen Victoria's accession.

(*Photograph by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*)

A Typical London Sedan Chair.

In 1669, the Duke of York's mistress, Arabella Churchill, lived in the square, paying 3s. 6d. poor rate to the parish. Her neighbour was Moll Davis, the King's mistress, who was reputed to have danced her way "from a bed on the cold ground to a bed royal." Late in his life Horace Walpole recalled seeing Arabella, then an old woman, being carried in her chair—"I had a perfect idea of her face, which was pale, round and sleek!"

In those days the square "was a receptacle for offal and cinders, and for all the cats and dogs in Westminster. At one time a cudgel trainer kept a ring there under the windows of the gilded salons of the nobility." So the inhabitants applied to Parliament for permission to put up rails and plant trees. This enclosure was surrounded by "octagonal railings, the interior occupied by a round pond edged with stone."

By 1710, the number of chairs allowed to ply for hire in London was restricted to 200, the next year to 300. Steele suggested, in the pages of the *Tatler*, that a tax should be levied on them. The chairmen, usually Welshmen, carried their "fares" three miles for one shilling. There were constant brawls with the hackney coachmen about who was to "take the wall." The Thames watermen often joined in the fray. Swift had the window of his chair broken during a fight, and he was very indignant at having to pay for the damage!

The green coats worn by the chairmen were laced down the back, their waists encircled by belts of hide. At night they carried a lantern in the front of their pole. There were many complaints about their rough manners. One foggy day in St. James's Park they lost their way when carrying a female fare. The first man fell into Rosamond's Pond dragging the chair with him, and only with much difficulty was the passenger rescued alive.

In 1695, a new song called "The Jolly Chairmen" was printed. The following are three of the verses:—

Come listen well to a jocular song,
The which does to honest, stout Chairmen belong.
Who ply at St. James's near to Whitehall
Where gallants for Chairmen do commonly call.

The gallant whose pockets are lined with gold
He will all the pleasures of nature behold.
The Chairmen are sent for to hoist him away
From jilting, to tennis court, park or the play.

To the Court and the playhouse we carry our fare
Cracked, sound, and unsound, and all sorts of ware.
We carry the lazy, the proud and the pox,
And live by carrying Jack-in-the-box.

Primrose Rostron

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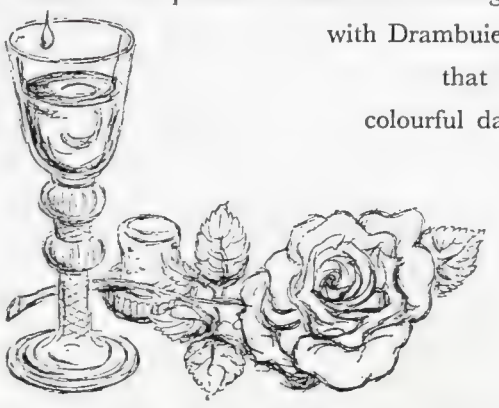

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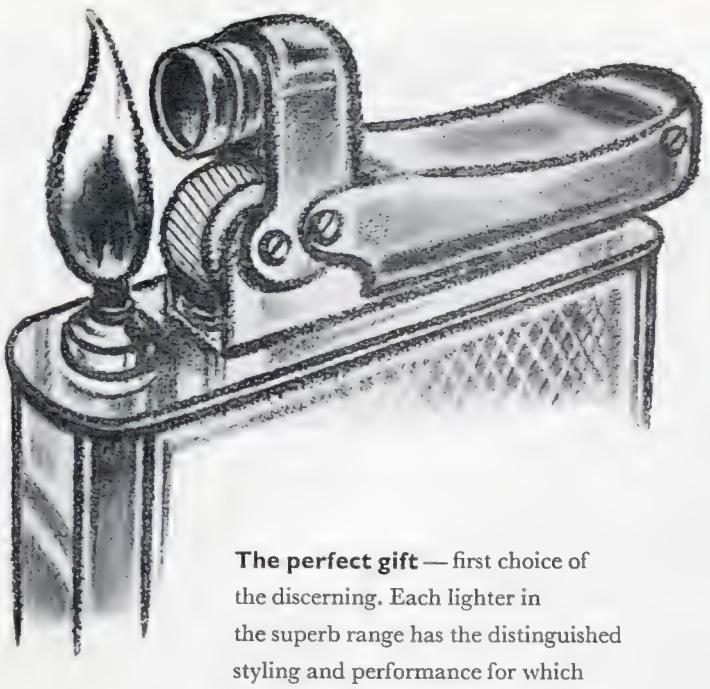

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Children Unlimited.—Christmas has been called The Children's Festival, and every child dreams of the wonders the Day may bring. Many will be lucky, but countless others depend only on your generosity to make their dreams come true. This number includes the 4,500 children who are the charges of THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY. It costs 25s. every minute to provide for this gigantic family, and so consequently little is left for Christmas joys. From the warmth and security of your family circle at Christmas will you remember this other family, and dip your hand a little deeper into your pocket to bring delight to a few small hearts. Gifts and donations will be gratefully received at The Old Town Hall, Kennington, London, S.E.11.

Those Who Cannot Be Cured.—Eminent people in many spheres of life have given generously of their time to help THE ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES AT PUTNEY. This Hospital receives no State aid, and is supported entirely by voluntary contributions. The patients are taught to do useful things as far as they are able. So their minds remain lively and cheerful, and no visitor can fail to be spiritually refreshed by contact with them. At this time please help the Royal Hospital to reward their infinite courage by sending your Christmas gift to The Secretary, ROYAL HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES, Putney, S.W.15.

Weary and Worn.—THE DISTRESSED GENTLEFOLK'S AID ASSOCIATION was formed in 1897 for the relief of Gentlepeople of both sexes. It now helps over 1,500 old and infirm people, either in their own homes, or in the Nursing Homes established for those who have no one to care for them. The Association depends entirely on voluntary contributions to carry on their work. This Christmas they urgently appeal for support to provide a little extra warmth and comfort for these lonely old people, and to bestow on them the blessings of security and peace of mind. Please help to help them. Your gifts will be welcome at the D.G.A.A., 10, Knaresborough Place, London, S.W.5.

"Prevention is Better . . ."—To cure disease is good—to prevent it is better. THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS plays a vital part in this campaign, both through

But . . . please don't forget the others!

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Will you be their SANTA CLAUS?

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Christmas Donations gratefully received by the Secretary.

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One day

One day in the year—Poppy Day—is devoted to Haig's Fund. Upon the money collected depends—to a great extent—the existence of the largest welfare organisation of its kind in the world.

The needs of the ex-Service community do not lessen with the years and Poppy Day donations cannot alone finance current commitments and the urgent expansion programmes at present under way.

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NO, never again. Never again just down to the letter-box. Nor even a few feet to open the window and listen to the Christmas bells. You see, she is incurable. She is one of the wonderful, happy people who live at the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables at Putney—people who depend entirely *on your help*, your contribution, to live only in their hearts that happy life which you live on your own two feet. This Christmastide—as the children or grandchildren hang up their stockings—think to yourself just what *walking* means to you and yours. And send a present, however small, to this group of brave people at the Royal Hospital and Home for Incurables, Putney, London, S.W.15, marking your envelope "Xmas." (It is not State-aided; and depends entirely on *your* contribution.)

FOR CHRISTMAS

he Festival Bright for Others

health education and in the giving of help and advice to patients. This is a voluntary body, and funds are provided by the sale of Christmas Seals. These gaily-coloured seals make a splendid decoration for letters and parcels at the festive season. They can be obtained for 4s. per sheet of 100 from the Duchess of Portland, N.A.P.T., Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1.

The Happy Family.—Most people have heard of DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES, and know that this great organisation cares for deprived children and brings them up to become good and useful citizens. "Britain's Biggest Family" numbers more than 7,500 boys and girls. It depends on the voluntary support of the public. Dr. Barnardo's is a most deserving cause, especially at this Christmas season. Will you help this year? Gifts should be sent to 20 Barnardo House, Stepney Causeway, London, E.1.

Cancer Research.—THE IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH FUND has been established for over fifty-five years, and during this period has striven ceaselessly to uncover the causes of cancer, and to further the prevention and treatment of this dreadful disease. The Fund receives no official income for its vital work, and must rely for its continued existence upon the generosity and gratitude of the public. Please help the Fund to continue this work by sending a donation to THE IMPERIAL CANCER RESEARCH FUND, Royal College of Surgeons of England, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, W.C.2.

The Salvation Army.—Although it is again the season of Christmas-trees and family reunions, for countless thousands there will be no warming flame on the family hearth. But they will not be forgotten. Irrespective of race and creed Salvationists will seek them out. There will be visits and gifts for the aged and the sick; children's parties in Army homes, as well as Christmas dinners for the 14,000 homeless men and women whose only shelter is a Salvation Army Hostel. All over the world the Army's helping hand will be extended in joyous service this Christmastide. Your gifts to help further this work will be gratefully received at 113, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4.

"—Of Shoes and Ships—"—To most of us in these islands there is a definite magic in the call of the sea. There should be magic, therefore, for those who read of the famous *Arethusa* Training Ship which trains boys for the sea. In THE SHAFTESBURY HOMES more boys—and girls, too—are brought up and trained for citizenship, and over 40,000 children have already passed through The Ship and The Homes. This great work depends largely upon your personal interest and support. If you can help these children's homes this Christmas please send your gifts to the Secretary, THE SHAFTESBURY HOMES and *Arethusa* Training Ship, 164, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1.

Please send a Christmas Gift to the

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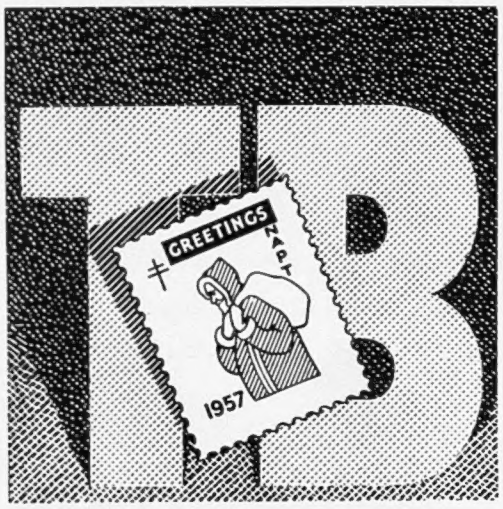

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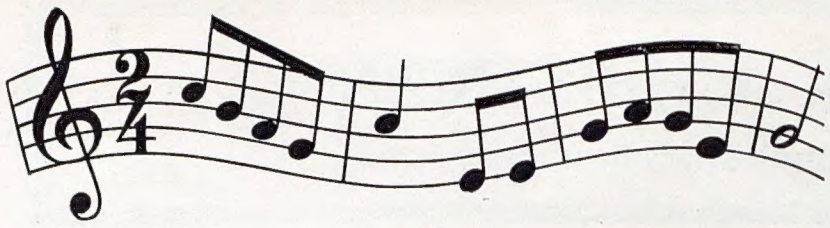

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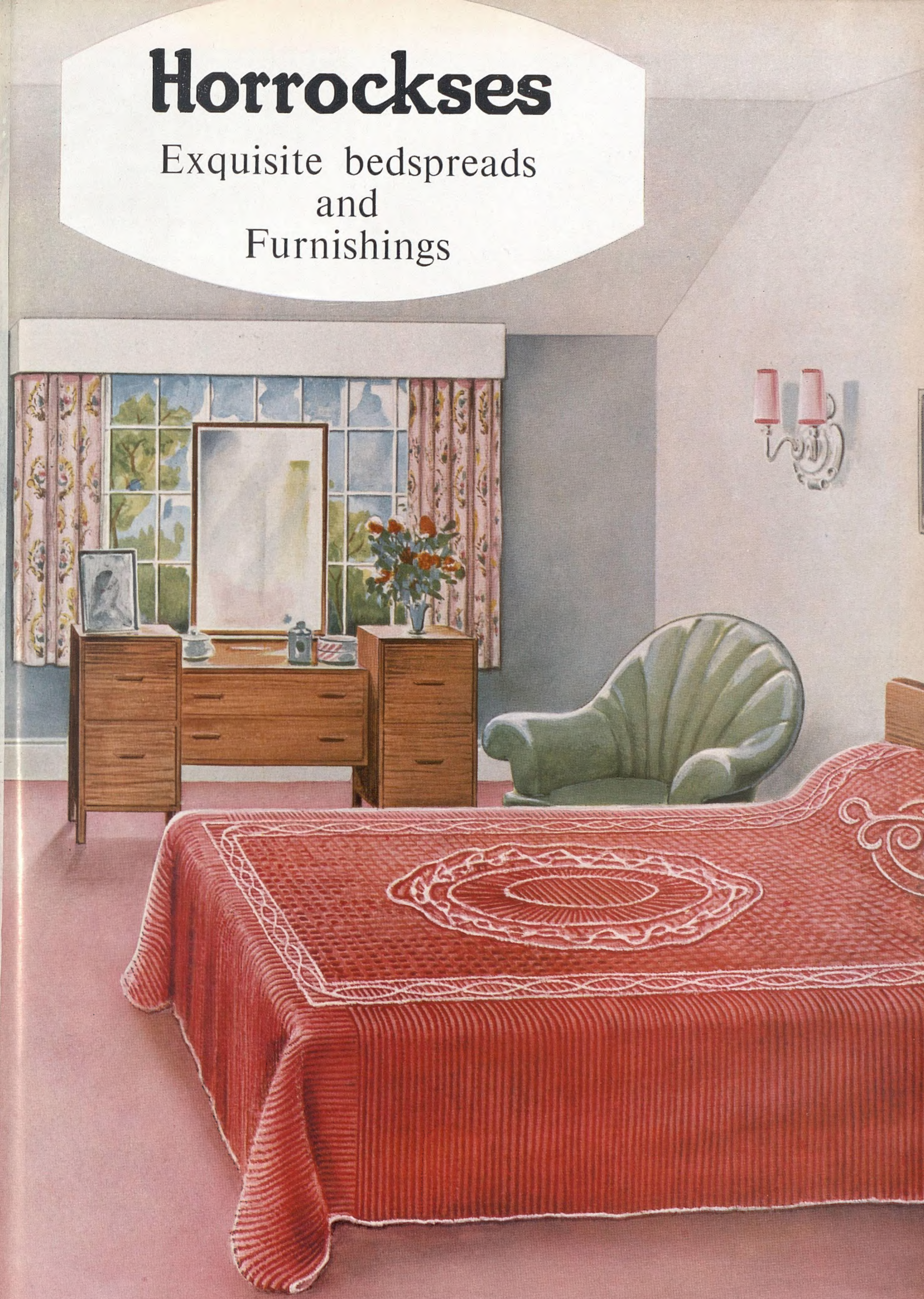

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